HARVARD COLLEGE
JUL 3 1928
LIBRARY

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents

Published by The Theosophical Society
at 64 Washington Mews, New York, N. Y.

July; October; January; April

Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 9 Beaconsfield Road, Low Fell, Gateshead-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, 6s., postpaid.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XXVI, NO. 1

July, 1928

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	1
THEOSOPHY	9
A BACKGROUND FOR CHÊLASHIP	18
WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY	23
CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD	26
ON THE SCREEN OF TIME	34
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	44
T. S. ACTIVITIES: Convention Report; Letters of Greeting	50
REVIEWS	93
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	95

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered as second-class matter September 5, 1923, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Copyright, 1928, by The Theosophical Society

ARD COLLEGE
JUL 3 1928
LIBRARY

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1928

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Self-Glorification or Self-Conquest

IN the first two Gospels, there is a story of gentle irony at the expense of the non-discerning disciples. The Master had entered into a ship, to sail across the Sea of Galilee. The disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And the Master charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. And the disciples reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.

One wonders which of them first saw the point of this delightful and yet pathetic incident; to whom do we owe its recording for posterity, to teach us not to be too literal minded? A like problem arises regarding the discourse of the Buddha with which we are concerned, and which also warns against the leaven of the Pharisees: against those who pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith; who love salutations in the marketplaces, and for a pretence make long prayers.

In the story to be narrated, it is not certain to whose excellent memory and fine sense of humour we owe the record of the Buddha's words. Tradition, in this matter wholly to be relied on, tells us that, at the first great Council of his disciples, shortly after his bodily death, the great disciples recalled and recorded his discourses, while on the beloved disciple Ananda was laid the duty of putting each discourse in its proper setting, restoring the circumstances under which it was delivered, with the names and characters of those who were present or took part in the conversation of which the Buddha's teaching was a part. This choice of the beloved Ananda shows that his fellow disciples believed that he possessed a vivid pictorial memory, keen powers of observation, and a loving attention to his great Master's doings, which would be certain to note and retain the image of the persons

and events at each of the Master's discourses; a shrewd insight into character also, and, we are justified by the records in adding, a lively and charming sense of humour.

In the discourse with which we are concerned, it is not recorded that the beloved Ananda is present. The Buddha is depicted as going alone to visit a group of self-mortifying ascetics, who evidently filled a conspicuous place in the India of twenty-five centuries ago, as they do in the India of to-day; the most sensational of these self-tortures, lying on a bed of spikes, was evidently fashionable then, as it is now. But the fine character drawing and the keen humour of this story are exactly those that we find in others, of which Ananda may well have been the recorder, and we may conjecture either that the beloved disciple accompanied his Master, or that the Buddha himself told the story on his return to his disciples, with Ananda as a delighted auditor.

Once upon a time, says the story, the Master was living at Rajagriha, on Vulture Peak. At that time it befell that a certain mendicant pilgrim, Nigrodha by name, that is, Banyan Tree, was residing in the park of the devout Queen Udumbarika, whose name was taken from an Indian fig tree; with him were many mendicant pilgrims, in all three thousand pilgrims. Now it happened that there was in Rajagriha a pious householder, whose name was Sandhana, that is, Bond, who ardently desired to see the Buddha. And this came into the mind of Bond, the householder:

"This is not a fitting time to see the Master, for the Master is in retirement; nor is it a good time to visit his disciples, who are disciplining their minds and hearts, for they also are in retirement. What if I were to go to Queen Fig Tree's park, to visit the pilgrim Banyan, who is dwelling there?"

Thus the narrator finds a motive for his story, and incidentally draws an outline portrait of the householder Bond, who, as he tells us, forthwith set out for the park, to pay his visit to the pilgrim Banyan. Then follows one of those set passages, keenly observed and delightfully framed, whose stately repetition gives a peculiar charm to the Buddhist discourses. We are told that the self-mortifying pilgrims, gathered in the wide rest-house of the Queen's park, were not, as we might expect, engaged in debate concerning righteousness and the law; but, instead, with a roaring, with a shrill and mighty noise, they were relating many kinds of common tales, such, for example, as talk of kings, talk of robbers, talk of ministers, talk of armies, talk of terror, talk of war, talk of food and drink and garments and couches, talk of garlands and perfumes, talk of kinships and cars, of villages and towns and countries, talk of women and men and heroes, talk of the street and of the village well, talk of the dead, all kinds of stories, traditions of the forming of lands and oceans, discussions of being and non-being.

It is exactly like the mental medley of things wise and foolish that fill the columns of a modern newspaper, and the list recurs a little later, in identical terms, with the fine rhythmical effect of the orchestral enumeration in the story of the burning fiery furnace, in that compendium of magnificent stories, the Book of Daniel.

The pilgrim Banyan, who seems to have been somewhat better than his mendicant companions, saw Bond, the householder, approaching from afar, and tried to quiet the noisy crew:

"Gentlemen!" he said, "Gentlemen, be less noisy! Make less noise, for here is one of the ascetic Gotama's adherents coming, the householder Bond. White-robed adherents of the ascetic Gotama dwell at Rajagriha, and this householder Bond is one of them. And these worthies delight in freedom from noise, they are well bred in their quietude, they speak in praise of quietude; perhaps, if he saw that our assembly was free from noise, it might occur to him to pay us a visit."

Whether from shame, or merely through curiosity, the mendicant pilgrims consented to be silent.

Then indeed the householder Bond came up to where the pilgrim Banyan was, and, coming up to the pilgrim Banyan, he saluted him with courtesy and politeness, and sat down beside him. Seating himself beside the pilgrim Banyan, the householder Bond spoke thus:

"Far different is the manner in which these sectarian gentlemen comport themselves when they are assembled together, roaring with shrill and mighty noise, relating many kinds of common tales, such, for example, as talk of kings, robbers and ministers," and so on, through the whole imposing list of themes, "far different is this indeed from the practice of our Master, who abides in the forest, seated in meditation, seeking quietude and silence, pondering wisdom, with heart intent on hidden things, devoted to retirement."

Nettled by this mild reproof, the pilgrim Banyan said:

"Go to, householder! Knowest thou with whom the ascetic Gotama confers? With whom does he hold converse? With whom does he clarify his understanding? The understanding of the ascetic Gotama is injured by this habit of solitude, the ascetic Gotama does not know how to conduct a meeting, he cannot carry on a debate, he is really not in the current of things. Your ascetic Gotama, with his habit of solitude, his ignorance of meetings and debates, his limited outlook, is like a cow going round in circles! Look you, householder, if the ascetic Gotama should come to this assembly, we should shut him up with a single question, we should bowl him over like an empty water-jar!"

So the pilgrim Banyan warmed himself up with intemperate speech. And one may doubt whether in the whole cycle of Buddhist scriptures, there is a finer touch of humour than this. For this passage, like all these records, is to be recited aloud by devoted disciples, whose reverence for the Buddha knows no limits. Consider with what a twinkle of the heart they would describe their august Master walking in circles like a cow, and then consider the fine dramatic irony of the sequel.

For we are told that the Master, through the principle of divine hearing, pure and surpassing that of men, heard this edifying talk of the pilgrim Banyan and the householder Bond, and that, hearing, he straightway descended from Vulture Peak and came to the bank of the lotus pond where the peacocks

were fed, and walked to and fro, taking the air on the lawn of the peacocks. Then the pilgrim Banyan beheld the Master taking the air on the lawn of the peacocks, beside the lotus pond, and, seeing him, thus addressed his company:

"Gentlemen, be less noisy! Gentlemen, make less noise! There is the ascetic Gotama, walking to and fro, taking the air, on the lawn of the peacocks beside the lotus pond. And that worthy delights in freedom from noise, he speaks in praise of quietude; should he see how imbued with quietude is this our assembly, he might think well to come and pay us a visit. And should the ascetic Gotama come to our assembly, we should ask him this question:— What, worthy Master, is the Law of Righteousness which the Master teaches to his adherents, trained in which the Master's adherents win serenity, recognizing this Law as the firm foundation of their spiritual life?"

We are told that the pilgrims became silent; perhaps they cherished a delighted hope of seeing the Buddha walking in circles like a cow, or bowled over like an empty water-jar.

Straightway the Master came over to where the pilgrim Banyan was. And the pilgrim Banyan said this to the Master:

"Let the worthy Master come! Welcome is the worthy Master! The worthy Master has been a long time making up his mind to come to us! Let the worthy Master be seated; this seat is prepared for him!"

The Master seated himself on the seat that was prepared. The pilgrim also seated himself on a low seat beside him. Then the Master said to the pilgrim Banyan, seated by him:

"On what topic, Banyan, were you engaged here? What was the theme that was interrupted?"

The pilgrim Banyan, saying nothing whatever about a cow walking in circles, or a rolling water-jar, thus answered the Master:

"We saw the Master walking to and fro on the lawn of the peacocks beside the lotus pond, taking the air, and, seeing him, we said, Should the Master visit this our assembly, we should ask him this question:—What, worthy Master, is the Law of Righteousness which the Master teaches to his adherents, trained in which the Master's adherents win serenity, recognizing this Law as the firm foundation of their spiritual life? This is the topic that was interrupted when the Master arrived."

"It is difficult, Banyan, for one of other views, for one of other practices, of other purposes, of other mental habits, for one following other teachers, to understand the discipline which I give to my adherents, the discipline through which my adherents are established in serenity, recognizing it as the firm foundation of their spiritual life. But come, Banyan, ask me a question concerning your own teaching of extreme self-mortification: in what conditions is this self-mortification perfected, and in what conditions is it not perfected?"

The Buddha turned aside the question regarding his own teaching by saying that it was difficult to understand. Without doubt he realized that, while there was a spark of genuine spirituality in Banyan, the great mass of

mendicant pilgrims with him were full of cavilling, stony ground on which no precious seed should be sown. But there was a still more definite reason, a rule framed by the Buddha himself, which he formulates in another discourse: "Whoever has been an adherent of another sect, and wishes to enter the discipline of this Law of Righteousness, desiring admission to the first degree, and afterwards to the second degree, must first remain on probation for four months, after which the disciples of strenuous heart will admit him to membership in the first degree, and afterwards to membership in the second degree of the Order of disciples. But even in such a case, the difference between individuals is taken into account." It was not a favourable moment to explain this wise rule to Banyan; but, if his desire for light was genuine and strong, he would presently find it out. So, for the time, the Buddha parried the premature question, and introduced the whole subject of self-mortification, thus finding a motive for the special theme of this discourse.

How unfavourable the occasion was for expounding the Law of Righteousness, the narrative reveals; for when the Buddha had answered Banyan as just recorded, the swarm of mendicant pilgrims began to shout with exceeding great noise, "Marvellous, Sir, wonderful, Sir, is the superhuman gift and power of the ascetic Gotama in holding back any pronouncement regarding his own teaching, and turning the conversation to the teaching of others!"

To the credit of the pilgrim Banyan, we are told that he imposed silence on these ironical mendicants, and spoke thus to the Master:

"We, Sire, are believers in penitential self-mortification, we hold that penitential self-mortification is essential, we practise penitential self-mortification. In what conditions, Sire, is this penitential self-mortification perfected, and in what conditions is it not perfected?"

In reply, the Buddha enumerates a long series of practices, which may with advantage be condensed. There is, first, a certain anarchism in manners, often characteristic of youthful radicals even in our own enlightened age, beginning with curt speech and culminating in a scrupulous abstinence from the use of water, whether internally or externally. It is worth noting that one finds the same abstinence among the hermits of the Egyptian desert, in the third and fourth centuries of our era. Next come scruples regarding food, the refusal to eat cooked food, precise rules as to accepting gifts of food, a punctilious spacing of the times of eating, whether once a day, once in three days, or once a week, and so forth; practices also found, carried to extreme exaggeration among the Egyptian solitaries. Indeed, one may suppose that this drift to meticulous formalism in the Egyptian desert may well have frustrated a spiritual movement originally of the greatest promise, so that it was necessary for Benedict to frame a new rule, on spiritual principles. Then come self-mortifying postures, such as standing bareheaded in burning sunshine, or lying on a bed of thorns or spikes. There is a quaint note on this kind of practice in the records of the Egyptian hermits, exactly in line with the Buddha's teaching: "The brother went to his cell, and fell on his face upon the ground, and for three whole days and nights he wept

before God. And after these things, when his thoughts were saying unto him, 'Thou art now an exalted person, and thou hast become a great man,' he used to contradict them, and set before his eyes his former shortcomings, and say, 'Thus were all my offences.'"

After enumerating many penitential self-mortifications, the Buddha said, "What thinkest thou, Banyan? If they be thus carried out, is penitential self-mortification perfected, or is it not perfected?"

Banyan replied that, in his view, self-mortification was in fact perfected by these practices. But the Buddha said:

"Even when these self-mortifications are perfectly carried out, I say that they are subject to certain impurities."

"In what way, Master, when these self-mortifications are perfectly carried out, are they subject to impurities?" The opening of the pilgrim's mind and the softening of his self-righteous heart are indicated by his addressing the Buddha as Master, in contrast to the rather abrupt "ascetic Gotama", used by the other mendicants. The Buddha's reply introduces the essence of the discourse, which is in principle closely akin to the criticism of the Pharisees:

"An ascetic, Banyan, enters on a penitential exercise. Because of this penitential exercise he is delighted with himself, filled full with self-satisfaction. When this so happens, Banyan, it is an impurity. Again, Banyan, an ascetic enters on a penitential exercise. Because of this penitential exercise he exalts himself and despises another. When this so happens, Banyan, it is an impurity. Once again, Banyan, an ascetic enters on a penitential exercise. Because of this penitential exercise he becomes infatuated, he becomes intoxicated and falls into negligence. When this so happens, Banyan, it is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic enters on a penitential exercise. Because of this penitential exercise, he receives gifts and gains honour and fame. And because he receives gifts and gains honour and fame, he becomes greatly pleased with himself. When an ascetic, thus gaining gifts, honour and fame, is greatly pleased with himself, this, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic enters on a penitential exercise. Because of this penitential exercise, he receives gifts and gains honour and fame. And because he receives gifts and honour and fame, he exalts himself and despises another. When this so happens, Banyan, it is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic enters on a penitential exercise. Making a distinction of foods, he says, 'This commends itself to me; this does not commend itself to me.' That which commends itself not to him, he steadily rejects, but that which commends itself to him, he eats greedily, becoming infatuated with it, not recognizing the sin and danger in this gluttony. This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic enters on a penitential exercise, his motive being a desire for gifts, honour and fame, with the thought that kings and courtiers, nobles, priests and householders will pay him honour. This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic grows jealous of some ascetic or Brahman, saying, 'That fellow lives lavishly; he eats every kind of thing, that is, things grown from roots, things grown from shoots,

things grown from fruit, things grown from sprouts, things grown from seeds; he grinds them all together with his thunderous jaws!' This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic sees some other ascetic or Brahman honoured, esteemed, highly regarded, respected among those whom he visits for alms. And, seeing this, he thinks, 'People honour, esteem, regard and respect this fellow who lives lavishly; but they do not honour, esteem, regard, nor respect me, a true ascetic, living a life of austerity!' So he nourishes ill-will and resentment against those who give alms. This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic seats himself in some place where he will be seen of men. This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic slinks about among those who give alms, thinking to himself, 'This is a part of my penance! This is a part of my penance!' This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, an ascetic practises secretiveness. Should an ascetic ask him, 'Does this commend itself to thee?'—even though disapproving, he says, 'It does commend itself!' And, even when he approves, he answers, 'It does not commend itself!' Thus he becomes a deliberate liar. This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, when the Tathagata or an adherent of the Tathagata, teaching the Law of Righteousness, follows a method worthy of approval, he does not accept it. This, Banyan, is an impurity. Once more, Banyan, a self-mortifying ascetic may nourish wrath and enmity; he may nourish hypocrisy and deceit; he may nourish avarice and envy; he may be crafty and full of guile; he may be obstinate and conceited; he may entertain sinful wishes and fall under their sway; he may entertain false views, he may become addicted to delusive opinions, he may grow worldly minded, grasping after riches, turning away from renunciation. These, Banyan, are impurities. What thinkest thou, Banyan, are these things impurities, when they exist in him who practises self-mortification, or are they not impurities?"

"They are impurities, Sire; they are not free from impurity. It is indeed the truth, Sire, that one who practises self-mortifying penances may be tainted with all these impurities, and much more, that he may be guilty of any one of them."

"Very good, Banyan. But let there be an ascetic who enters on a penitential exercise. He is not delighted with himself, nor is he full of self-satisfaction because of his penitential exercise. In so far as he is not delighted with himself nor full of self-satisfaction, in that measure is he purified. He exalts not himself, nor despises another. In that measure is he purified. He is not infatuated nor intoxicated. In that measure is he purified. Should he, because of his penitential exercise, receive gifts and honour and fame, he is not delighted with himself, nor filled with self-satisfaction because of this. In that measure is he purified. Nor does he on that account exalt himself and despise another. In that measure is he purified. Nor, should he receive gifts and honour and fame, is he thereby infatuated and intoxicated, falling into negligence. In that measure is he purified. Nor does he fall into making distinctions in foods, saying, 'This commends itself to me; this

does not commend itself to me.' Nor, saying this, does he steadily reject that which does not commend itself to him, nor does he eat greedily that which commends itself to him, becoming infatuated with it, not recognizing the sin and danger in this gluttony. In that measure is he purified. Nor does he enter on a penitential exercise moved by a desire for gifts, honour and fame, with the thought that kings, courtiers, nobles, priests and householders will pay him honour. In that measure is he purified. Nor does he grow jealous of some ascetic or Brahman, saying, 'That fellow lives lavishly; he eats every kind of food, grinding them all together with his thunderous jaws!' In that measure is he purified. Nor, seeing some other ascetic or Brahman honoured, esteemed, highly regarded, respected among those whom he visits for alms, does he think, 'People honour, esteem, regard and respect this fellow who lives lavishly; but they do not honour, esteem, regard, nor respect me, a true ascetic, living a life of austerity!' Nor does he nourish ill-will and resentment against those who give alms. In that measure is he purified. Nor does he seat himself in some place where he will be seen of men, nor slink about among those who give alms, thinking to himself, 'This is a part of my penance!' Nor does he practise secretiveness, dissembling his views, and thus falling into deliberate lying. In that measure is he purified. Nor, when the Tathagata or an adherent of the Tathagata, teaching the Law of Righteousness, follows a method worthy of approval, does he reject it. In that measure is he purified. Nor does he nourish wrath or enmity, hypocrisy or deceit, avarice or envy, craft or guile; nor is he obstinate or conceited; nor does he entertain sinful wishes, falling under their sway; nor does he hold false views, becoming addicted to delusive opinions, nor grow worldly minded, grasping after riches and turning away from renunciation. In that measure is he purified.

"What thinkest thou then, Banyan? If this be so, is self-mortification purified or not purified?"

"Truly, Sire, if this be so, self-mortification is purified, it fails not of purification. It has reached the summit; it has penetrated to the inmost core!"

"Not so, Banyan! Not yet has self-mortification reached the summit nor penetrated to the inmost core; rather it has only touched the outermost bark."

"How then, Sire, may self-mortification reach the summit and penetrate to the inmost core?"

It is a wise question, showing something of the grace of humility. We shall on a future occasion consider the Buddha's wise and gracious answer.

THEOSOPHY[1]

PERHAPS it would be an auspicious beginning, if we were to try to make clear what The Theosophical Society is, whose guests we are to-night, and at the same time to say what it is not. The Theosophical Society, which has invited you to this lecture, is the representative, the continuation, of The Theosophical Society founded here in New York by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and others, in November, 1875. It has maintained a continuous life for more than half a century, working for the same ideals, advancing toward the same goal. It is in no way connected with other societies calling themselves Theosophical, which are under the guidance of Mrs. Annie Besant, Mrs. Katherine Tingley, or whoever it may be.

When the subject of this lecture was being considered, the conviction was reached that the most useful and timely theme would be the relation of the Masters of Wisdom to humanity; the relation of those divine powers—divine in wisdom and love—to the life and destiny of the human race; a relation active throughout the ages, active at this moment, active, as we hope and are convinced, throughout the centuries to come; carrying on the same work of beneficence and illumination until its consummation, when all of humanity that is willing has reached the height of spiritual development which the Masters of Wisdom already exemplify and embody.

If we speak of the relation of the Masters of Wisdom to humanity, we suggest a picture of light and shadow strongly contrasted: the light of the Masters, and the heavy shadows of our human life; and, if we look back through centuries of history and consider the cumulative tragedy of the life of mankind, race after race gaining a certain attainment,—intellectual, artistic, spiritual, material,—coming like a wave to its crest, and then, like a wave breaking and disappearing, we may realize how great, how long continued, how complete that tragedy has been. Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians have so completely vanished as nations, that we have to dig their memorials out of the earth. Still older peoples have not even left a name, while it would seem that the most ancient of surviving civilizations, that of the Chinese, is obstinately determined to hack itself to pieces and disappear.

It is already seriously debated whether this Western civilization of ours may not be on the same path; whether we have not reached, or will not soon reach the culmination of our attainment, moral, intellectual, artistic—and it seems to be in the main mental and material; it is questioned whether, having thus reached our culmination, we shall not also disappear, to be covered over by the merciful earth like the Babylonians and Assyrians. This is

[1] From stenographic notes of a lecture by Charles Johnston, on April 28, 1928, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

one of the problems we may consider: must we inevitably share the fate of these dead nations, or is there something that may be done to ward off destruction, something, perhaps, that we ourselves may help to do?

We have that long panorama of shadows, of vanished and ruined races, going back, not for millenniums only, but for millions of years, each race having its birth, its maturity, its death, and then, for most of them, complete oblivion; and, in contrast with these endless shadows, ceaseless effort by the Masters of Wisdom to enlighten, to redeem, to enkindle this stumbling humanity, for whom every step forward is a fall; the Masters of Wisdom, working, toiling, labouring endlessly, with infinite beneficence and resource, infinite patience, infinite sacrifice. If we thoughtfully study one of the main themes of The Theosophical Society—the great religions of the world—we may interpret them in this sense: namely, the divine expedients used by the Masters of Wisdom, by the Lodge of Masters, in the heavy task of saving humanity which so often seems determined on self-destruction.

We may begin such a survey with ancient Egypt, and the Mystery teaching of the divine Osiris, who is, perhaps, the earliest of the Masters of Wisdom within the period we call historical, to undertake a mission to mankind, endeavouring to impart such wisdom and knowledge and virtue as mankind was ready to receive. His great task culminated in a sacrificial death, and his body was dismembered and scattered through the land of Egypt. This is the history of a great Master; it is at the same time a symbol of the primordial sacrifice of the Logos; of that synthesis of the spiritual consciousness of mankind, which again and again makes the sacrifice of supreme self-giving, in the effort to redeem the human race.

If we come next to those wise scriptures of ancient India, the great Upanishads, we shall find one theme running through them all: namely, the wisdom of the Masters, their eager desire to impart this wisdom, and the path toward them which they would have us seek and follow, so that we too may share their eternal treasure.

In a certain sense, we may say that the message of the Masters of Wisdom is that of a conditional immortality. They do not teach an inevitable immortality, an immortality inherent in, or even to be thrust on, every human being. The Masters of Wisdom teach no such inevitable immortality.

We may easily illustrate this. Take first a sentence from the Upanishads: "Foolish children seek after outward desires, and come to the wide-spread net of Death; but the wise, beholding immortality, seek not for the enduring among unenduring things"; and compare with it a like pronouncement of Jesus: "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it."

There is no inevitable immortality for those who do not earn it. In truth, mortality is a fate which would overtake us all, were it not for the divine interposition of the Masters of Wisdom, who stretch out to us immortal

hands of help and succour. So the Upanishads are full of the teaching of wisdom which reveals the path whereby we may ascend to their immortal world, passing through the Gates of Gold to the Masters' heritage of immortal life.

The Upanishads teach the wisdom of Atma, the Supreme Self of all beings; the same divine Life which Philo of Alexandria later called the Logos, the Divine Mind, the collective spiritual consciousness of our universe. They tell us that, while each of us may seem to be a wanderer and exile, lonely, desolate in our world of shadow and of sorrow, we are in reality neither alone nor desolate, but undivided, unseparated rays of the Universal Self, the Logos. What is needed to secure our immortality—an immortality which is still conditional, until this victory is won—is the realization of our oneness with the Supreme Self. The Upanishads show how, step by step, we may mount the golden stairs; they tell us what we must leave behind; what we must gain, as we tread the small, old path; what we must achieve; with the promise that we shall in the fulness of time be initiated into the fulness of that eternal, universal Supreme Self of all beings.

In their essence, the Upanishads may date from the same period as the great Osiris,—let us say, twelve or thirteen thousand years ago. In the course of ages, their sublime teaching began to be obscured in the hearts and minds of lesser men, men of smaller spiritual stature, diminished valour, contracted wisdom. About the time of the Buddha, twenty-five centuries since, this ancient teaching was altogether obscured in the general understanding, and its place was taken by a false view concerning the Self. Therefore, we find that superb sage, Siddhartha the Compassionate, known as the Buddha, the Awakened, attacking this false view of the Self. The Awakened One began by awakening in his own splendid soul and spirit the ancient Wisdom, the ancient Power, the ancient Love of the Masters and of the Logos. Then, when he had reached full enlightenment, tradition tells of a dramatic scene. The Buddha, after gaining the Light, had fallen almost into despair over the hopelessness of communicating that Light to mankind, so callous, so full of delusions and false desires. As he sat thus despondent, there appeared to him great Brahma, who may represent the Head of the Lodge of Masters. By strong and eloquent pleading, the great Brahma at last persuaded the Buddha at least to make the attempt; perhaps a few might listen, perhaps a few might understand.

We may fancy that they held a conference as to ways and means. So many expedients had been tried, for the most part with little fruit. The disease of the time was philosophical egotism, which falsely transferred to the temporal, personal self the absolute being of the divine and universal Supreme Self; and we may suppose that the Buddha, counselling with great Brahma, worked out this plan: It would be possible, perhaps, to win recruits for immortality, for the Lodge of Masters, if he could first knock out of them every trace of egotism. If this process led to their extinction, that would be unfortunate for them; but, should they happily survive, awaking again, as

it were, on the further side of egotism, it would then be possible to teach them wisdom. So the Buddha set himself, in any and every way, to attack the idea of egotism in the human heart; to cut at the false self, built upon a mental image of the body, which comes to believe itself the central reality of life, the one significant thing in the universe, to which all other persons must bow down, which all the wealth of the world must serve; the supreme egotism which is self-seeking even in death. The Buddha set himself to kill this out first of all. From this point of view, this negative part of his teaching, this part which negates and demolishes the false self, may seem less full of positive splendour than are the Upanishads; but the splendour is there. The false self is attacked and destroyed, only that the true spiritual consciousness which it masks may be revealed.

The Buddha's aim was the same as that of the great Upanishads: to teach the same superb Wisdom, the same path of Life, the same immortality; but, finding the small, old path choked by egotism, he determined by all the power of his mighty arm to clear away that egotism first. So we find him flatly denying that there is any reality whatsoever in the ego, the false, usurping self that men worship. It is a delusion that must be finally conquered before salvation becomes even a possibility. Those who, hearing his teaching, accepted it, thereupon, in the traditional words of the Buddhists, left the household life for the homeless life; that is, they finally surrendered all personal ambition, personal self-seeking of every kind. Having done this, they came to him, saying: "To the Buddha for refuge I go; to his Law of Righteousness for refuge I go; to his Order for refuge I go." Pronouncing this sacramental formula, they did in reality sacrifice the false self, the egotism which is not Self at all, but rather the wraith, the counterfeit of the true and universal Self. Then, pressing forward on the other side of egotism, they attained in the fulness of time to the splendour of immortal life, and entered into a share of the high privilege and tremendous responsibility of the Lodge of Masters: responsibility for the spiritual life of all mankind.

If we come down five centuries nearer to our own time, we find the next great effort of the Masters of Wisdom, which is known to our Western world as the Incarnation of Jesus. If we be somewhat familiar with the ancient Eastern teaching, the teaching of the Upanishads, the teaching of the Buddha, we shall at once realize the identity of his teaching and purpose with these older efforts of Masters. Once more, the Lodge of Masters mobilized its forces, entrusting to one of its honoured members a tremendous and tragical mission to mankind,—which seems bent on self-destruction at every period of history, through determined egotism and the forfeiture of immortal life. We shall find an identity, and, at the same time, a difference of method and of plan. The great Upanishads set themselves to destroy the egotism of the false self by revealing the splendour of the true Supreme Self. When this teaching was materialized and misinterpreted, and the idol of the false self was once more enthroned, the Buddha set himself to smash that idol; and, perhaps we may say, trusted that those who survived and came through on

the further side of self, would then be fit to receive the deeper Wisdom which shines through his teachings like a golden light.

We find the Master who is known as the Christ—the Anointed—pursuing a method at once the same as to its goal, and somewhat different in means. He seems to have determined to do two things. The Buddha, in teaching the unreality of the false self, tried in every possible way to bring his followers to deny and abjure the false self; among other means, he showed with crystalline clarity that all the evils of life are the offspring of egotism, and of egotism alone. Because of egotism, mankind is beset with misery, miserable in birth, miserable throughout life, miserable in death; and, he said, if mankind would escape from misery, there is only one way of escape, and that is the destruction of egotism which is the root of all misery. So he used the lever of sorrow, as he used the lever of abnegation, to persuade us to abandon our idolatry of self.

Christ had the same goal: the conquest of self as the way to immortality. Time after time, he used the same words: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal": the teaching of the Upanishads and of the Buddha,—yet with a difference. While the Buddha used the lever of sorrow, which men so greatly dread, and before which so many men are arrant cowards, Christ met sorrow in another way. "Do not flee from sorrow," he said in effect, "but accept it, and learn its mighty lesson." Conquer self, conquer egotism, by accepting sorrow.

As a Master of Wisdom, he invariably carried out his own teaching with completeness, as did the Buddha. Therefore, his life, from its inception, rests on this acceptance of sorrow, which was his peculiar contribution, we may hold, to the spiritual mission of mankind; as the words of the ancient prophet so eloquently expressed it, "Despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." This acceptance of sorrow has a purpose in no wise different from the purpose of the Buddha. It is a part of the path which we must tread, and tread courageously with valiant heart, if we are really to conquer egotism and win immortality. To use a homely expression: there is no stick with only one end;—if we have pleasure at the one end, we shall inevitably have pain at the other. The only way is to take the whole stick. In this sense, the acceptance of sorrow is an inevitable part of the lesson of life; and the Buddha accepted suffering and sorrow with a fulness which has never been exceeded, as did also Christ; but the Buddha used the lever of sorrow differently.

We shall, perhaps, be right in thinking that Christ sought to break the idol of egotism in yet another way; a way which is infinitely appealing, because of the depth of sacrifice which it involved: namely, to break down egotism through the strong force of pity, of compassion. Here is a group of persons, each enclosed and imprisoned in his own egotism as in a coat of steel. If pity could soften their hearts, this egotism would melt away as snow banks melt before the sun. Therefore, Christ taught compassion. The parable of the good Samaritan, as perfect as any piece of narrative in literature, also carries the deepest lesson, the lesson of compassion. "Love one another—a new

commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you," —compassion, to melt the hardness of our human hearts.

But it was not only by teaching, by parable, by injunction that Christ sought to drive home this tremendous lesson. He made a greater sacrifice than that, a sacrifice which sounds the very depths of humiliation: he made himself the object of our compassion, made himself pitiful, hoping thereby against hope that, through compassion with his sorrow, through pity for his suffering, we might soften our hard hearts and so escape from our prison house, break our idols and enter into real life.

So we behold the Masters of Wisdom watching over our human destiny and intervening, time after time, always bringing the gift of immortality. As Krishna, speaking for the Masters of the Great Lodge, says, in the *Bhagavad Gita;* "Whenever there is a withering of the Law and an uprising of lawlessness, then I manifest myself, for the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of such as do evil"; there is no pacifist ring in Krishna's declaration, "for the destruction of such as do evil." It is an impressive expression of the law of Karma; and, since it is the law, we shall be wise to recognize it. The principal matter is that, whenever the need arises, the Masters of Wisdom intervene in our human life.

To return to the point from which we started: You are the guests of The Theosophical Society;—but not through any virtue or extraordinary beneficence on the part of members of The Theosophical Society. Fortunately for all of us, the river rose higher than our heads. The Theosophical Society, as many of us believe (you will not find this written in our Constitution, nor is it in any sense an obligation of members to believe it, but it is the deep conviction of many of us)—The Theosophical Society itself is such an effort, such an incarnation of wisdom and power and love, such a new teaching of that conditional immortality as is represented by the teachings and the lives of the great historical Avatars, the successive Incarnations of Divinity. If we believe and realize this, then we may truthfully say: "Prophets and kings have desired to see those things which we see, and have not seen them." We have here and now the greatest opportunity that it is possible for mankind to have. We shall come back to this, and consider how we may grasp our opportunity; but, first to go back to a question that may be in many minds, you may be inclined to ask: Whence come these Masters of Wisdom? Do they, following the view of that biology which is now in fashion, represent a special upgrowth from the animal world,—supermen in the sense that we are superanimals?

We are immensely indebted to the great teaching of evolution, which Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace put forward tentatively in 1859. We could hardly have hoped for the success of the Theosophical Movement had not the teaching of evolution preceded by sixteen years the founding of The Theosophical Society in 1875, because we teach,—or, to put the matter in its true order, because we first learned, and then tried to convey, the teaching of spiritual evolution, with a far greater scope and larger potency than anything of which

Darwin ever dreamed. We further hold that each and every one of the great Masters who have been named, and many more whom we hold in reverence, are evolutionists in a sense that makes Darwin seem like a child, speaking in words of one syllable. The Masters of Wisdom have a concept of evolution that sweeps through infinite ages and pervades innumerable worlds. The evolutionists of Darwin's school perceive only half the problem. There is one part of the great picture of evolution, of which they have not even gained a glimpse. We hold that other part to be of vital import. The Darwinists see an ascent from below,—and they do not carry it very far upward. We hope to see humanity go far higher than the best of them has been able to imagine. But we hold also that not less important is the descent from above.

Some astronomers and physicists are feeling vaguely after this supplemental truth. For these astronomers, our substantial and middle-aged sun stands halfway between the immensity of an orb, tenuous as a spider web, dispersed through boundless reaches of space, and a sun grown old, shrunk and shrivelled verging toward extinction. We find physicists like Frederick Soddy who think of an incandescent world, once more, finer than gossamer, gradually developing, or condensing, into a geological world like our familiar Earth.

So there are gleams and glimpses of a descent from above, anteceding the evolutionary ascent from below; but, as yet, no real insight into the truth that there is a descent of Spirit into Matter, in part to consolidate into Matter, and in part, infusing itself progressively through Matter, to raise Matter again toward its source, to transform Matter into self-conscious, omniscient Spirit. Soddy holds that the process he depicts, the alternation between incandescent and geological worlds, may take place again and again, and has probably taken place times without number in the beginningless past of the universe. This is altogether consonant with our teaching; it is clearly set forth in the Buddhist scriptures and in the ancient Puranas.

And we hold that each one of these great terrestrial or planetary days bore its harvest of spiritual perfection; that, from the spiritual harvest of an earlier age, an older epoch of universal life, the Masters of Wisdom are carried over, remaining with this our world in order to guard and guide this humanity of ours through its infancy and nonage,—our humanity which, from day to day, shows itself so sorely in need of the teaching of wisdom, and so desperately unwilling to accept that teaching, headstrong and determined on the fullest satisfaction of egotism, even though it mean destruction and extinction.

This, then, is the source from which have come the Masters of Wisdom. They are the golden grain, garnered from earlier harvests. They are the spiritual guardians of mankind, of our mankind, just as they in their time had their ministering guardians, who may have gone farther forward on the infinite path of Life.

This, then, is the goal toward which we press: to bring mankind to seek and find the hidden treasure, as it is called in the Upanishads, as it is called by Christ; the hidden treasure of our immortality, and to show how that treasure may be won. This is our message, as very humble and (I speak for myself)

very unworthy and inadequate servants of those Masters of Wisdom whom we fain would loyally and effectively serve. But, for all our shortcomings, we have the right, in the name of their attainment, in the name of their power and wisdom and love, to bid you seek and find this treasure, which may be yours, if you will accept it and fulfil the conditions necessary for its attainment.

Consider for a moment the general consciousness of men at the present day, the present hour. There are vague presentiments of immortality,—the churches echo the word immortality, but they echo it with flagging force and waning courage. Taking it all in all, the purposes of the world to-day are purely material: comfort and amusement; that is, comfort of the material body, and amusement of the personal self. About these things the heart-strings of the majority of people are wrapped, let us say, like wild convolvulus in a deserted garden, wrapping itself about a wretched rosebush that is being strangled to death. The truth is that, if the hearts of mankind are set on the comfort of the physical body, on the delectation of the personal self, then the logical thing to do is, to dig their own graves forthwith, for the reason that there is no conceivable immortality for them. They have deliberately bound themselves to what is mortal. This body is mortal,—and some of us are reasonably grateful that it is. No one imagines for a moment that it is immortal. They have staked their lives on what is certain to lose. Both the egotism and the body are doomed to death.

Think what it would be, if mankind, or any considerable portion of mankind, were to hold instead the splendid ideal which the Masters of Wisdom, by every form of sacrifice, of self-abasement, of self-immolation, have been holding forth to mankind through long centuries, long millenniums, and even millions of years. If we were to accept the promise of immortality through the destruction of egotism, through purification of heart, through a clean life, through compassion and indomitable heroism, through the search for wisdom and spiritual consciousness, what a transformation that would work in the world, a transformation promising a golden age far finer and more splendid than the fabled Golden Age of the past.

This, then, is our opportunity. This is the promise held out to us. Here is the great career, if you wish, open to all who are willing to offer themselves as recruits, in their own hearts, to their own ideals. We might say much as to practical steps, but I had rather end on the note of promise: the splendid treasure which the Masters of Wisdom have offered through the ages, the pearl of great price, of which Christ spoke, as the kingdom of heaven, namely, that very realm of the Masters, the hidden treasure of the Upanishads, which may be ours if we will fulfil the conditions.

One word more. You may ask, Where are these traditions of Masters? I might turn the question, and ask where they are not. The Oriental scriptures are saturated with them. The life of the Buddha is not so much the record of a great Master, it is the Master himself. The history of Christ is so eloquent with his compassion and his sincerity that his personality has been able to overcome and conquer all the blindness of bigots, all the evil that has

been done in his name. Even those who would not call themselves Christians, speak with reverence, with love, with admiration of him whom they consider a marvellous figure in the past; whom we hold to be a living Master in the present and in the future, with the Buddha and the Great Companions.

The scriptures with which we are most familiar have the same teaching of the Lodge of Masters. Throughout the Old Testament you will find the record of Messengers (translated "angels" and thereby somewhat obscured), like those who came to Abraham, foretelling "the destruction of such as do evil." There are like Messengers in the book of Daniel; and there is that great passage in the second book of Esdras, where on the holy hill, Esdras saw the Sons of Wisdom, and he said, "What are these? He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal": the Masters of Wisdom, as we believe them to be. In the New Testament, supplementing the central figure of the Master Christ, in the fourth chapter of the Apocalypse, there is again a picture of the Lodge of Masters, just as in the *Bhagavad Gita* and in the scriptures of Buddhism.

But it will not profit us if we leave the Masters of Wisdom in the Suttas and the Apocalypse. Our problem is, to find them here and now, through the sacrifice of our egotism, the purification of our hearts, through loyal service, flaming aspiration, fiery devotion. These are the means. These are the golden steps of the everlasting pathway to the House of Eternity.

This is our opportunity; the opportunity which, however inadequately, and imperfectly, I have tried to bring before every one who is here to-night as a hope, and, perhaps, to some, as a radiant splendour.

This is our opportunity. This is the Path. Let us take our courage in both hands and determine that, whatever be the cost, we shall seek the aid of the Great Companions and set forth on that immortal pathway, with the same goal toward which they press: to bring humanity out of darkness into light, out of death into immortality.

Keep thine ear open to the counsels of wisdom so that, if not wise now, thou mayest become so in thy future years and may die a wise man.—COWLES.

A BACKGROUND FOR CHÊLASHIP

THE purpose of this note is to outline, as simply and briefly as possible, certain salient features of a background, drawn from the study of Theosophy, against which the subject of chêlaship may be viewed in a less misleading perspective than when, taken out of its proper context, it is considered only in the terms of our ordinary Western thought.

Chêlaship is a state or stage of spiritual life—as definite and as impossible to evade in spiritual growth as is the corresponding stage of childhood in physical and mental growth. The word "chêla" means child; but as it is a matter of spiritual childhood, the first requisite for its understanding is some apprehension of spiritual life, in contradistinction to the ordinary personal life.

It is futile to attempt to define spirit. At the basis of every science, implicit in all speech, there are certain undefinables, which can only be pointed to; only be known as they are seen and experienced. Spirit and matter are two such undefinables. The theosophical philosophy presents these two as two aspects or facets of the essential Unity of Being, from which comes the duality that characterizes all manifestations of Being. They are the opposite poles of "conditioned existence", the whole manifested universe reflecting their mutual interaction and interpenetration. Spirit descends into matter, incarnating more and more of itself; and as it descends, it draws matter up, animating it, and building it into more and more highly organized forms to serve as vestures or vehicles of the spirit. In this view, therefore, the evolutionary process, the process of becoming, which we see throughout the whole manifested universe, is an essentially dual movement. The ascent of, or from, matter is concomitant with, and caused by, a descent of, or from, spirit. The one movement cannot be separated from the other, and the teaching of science, which focusses attention solely on the ascending sequence of animal forms, needs to be supplemented by a recognition of the other half of the process,—the progressive descent of the incarnating spirit. As material or animal life comes to us from below, so spiritual life comes to us from above. We share in each; neither is, or can be, pure in us. We cannot know "pure spirit" any more than we can know "pure matter", but we can know the direction in which we must look and move, if we are to see it more clearly and to incarnate it more fully. We must look above ourselves; move from what we are to what we are not yet,—leaning, pressing, out from our own nature to what is beyond our nature.

Therefore, while we cannot define "spirit", though it enters into all we are, so that our life is its life in us, though it is manifest wherever we look, immanent in all of nature, we see, nevertheless, that in order to point to it most directly, we must use a term of ill repute in modern thought—the adjective "supernatural". The spiritual life is a supernatural life; a life

that comes to us from above and that leads us to what is above. There is no power arising from nature itself that can enable it to transcend itself. The driving power of evolution and of upward progress is not in nature; it is in supernature. It is not a push; it is a pull.

Before we go further, let us try to recognize what this means in terms of our own experience. We identify at once the two opposing currents in our conscious life; the one arising from beneath, pertaining plainly to the vesture or vehicle of the spirit, not to the spirit itself. It is concerned with the animal part of us, the "lusts of the flesh", the craving for safety, ease, pleasure, the perpetuation of its own existence, and the exercise and gratification of its own energies. But even more closely it concerns itself with the psychic vesture—with our pictures of ourselves, which we seek to maintain at all costs, and to impress them upon all about us that we may see them reflected back to us on every side. Here is the greater part of ambition, and all of vanity. It is the love (if so high a word may thus be degraded) of what we consider ourselves to *be*, not of what we hope to become; of what *has been* incarnated and manifested in us, not of what is beyond and above us. It attaches itself to all that it can find of good in us; but to the extent to which it attaches itself, it turns that good into evil; for it makes good operate to hold us where we are, a barrier to our rising to what is better. On the other hand, we recognize in ourselves an opposite current, coming from above, bringing with it ideals and a scale of values that bear their own evidence of their authenticity, but which are wholly independent of the desires of the animal and psychic natures, though, as we have just indicated, many of them come to be reflected in and seized upon by the psychic self. This current from above prompts us to the service of these ideals, to the service of truth, of righteousness, of the welfare of others; to the setting aside of self for something higher than self. Our nature is thus the interpenetrations, the conflicts and the compromises, of self and selflessness; and day by day we act out this nature in good and ill. But both above and below what we *are*—what we thus incarnate day by day—we are conscious of unplumbed depths of what *we might be* that are constantly calling to us; of evil unimaginable with which the selfishness in ourselves is yet of one piece, and on the very brink of which, in moments of lurid self-revelation, we sometimes see ourselves to stand; and, on the other hand, of good—of heroic loyalties which shame our faithlessness, but before which our shame is lost in worship; of Being that is of itself beauty and truth, wisdom and power and love, and which stretches upward "without bar or wall" between it and the Supreme. And this, too, though it infinitely transcend us, is felt to be of one piece, not with what we are, but with that to which we aspire. We see or sense it as the living stream from which our ideals flow to us. It is not our self, but it is the source, the creator, of all that is of worth in our self. It is more than the source; it is the end and goal. It is both alpha and omega, the first and the last. It is more intimate than the self; and only in it can the self, losing itself, realize itself. It is not nature; it is supernature. Its life is the spiritual life.

This should serve to indicate what we are talking about when we talk of the spiritual life. It is not a matter of vague yearnings, of pious platitudes, of kindly, generous impulses, of dreamy reveries or church services, of humanitarianism or mere morality, of the keeping of the commandments or a blameless life. It is the upward striving of the whole man, in response to the drawing power of what is above him. It is the abandonment of nature, in reliance upon, and for the incarnation of, supernature. As we stand, we are creatures of the borderland. Three courses are open to us: to continue as we are, of divided loyalty, divided purpose, undoing with one hand what we do with the other, forever stultifying and nullifying ourselves; or we may claim citizenship in either country, in life with the spirit, or in death with the body,—but only at the cost of leaving the other and giving ourselves wholly, in undivided loyalty, to the one we choose.

We turn now to the second way in which we must draw upon Theosophy to supplement our modern thought. We may introduce it by recalling the old, unsolvable problem as to which came first, the chicken or the egg. Wherever we look at life we see maturity and infancy side by side; the oak, the acorn, and the growing sapling; but we have already noted that the view of the universe, and particularly of human evolution, which science offers us, traces the ascent of life from the germ of the single cell to the point where man is to-day, with no indication whatever as to whence that germ came or toward what maturity we are growing. Theosophy supplements this view, not only by pointing to the descending current of spirit, but also by its knowledge of the Masters, of perfected men, and of the great hierarchy of spiritual being that stretches unbroken to the Eternal. It shows us that our *life of becoming* is the offspring, the child, of life that has become, that *is*. Man is not the orphan that science depicts; he has his Father in the Heavens, and his Father's Fathers; who have become even as he must become, and they manifest, in its maturity, that to which his infancy must grow. It is from them and through them that the current of spiritual life reaches him. They are the realized embodiment of all to which he aspires and strives; it is their life, imparted to him, which enables him to aspire and to strive. But over and above the life which they thus transmit to what is beneath them, they remain themselves; not abstract spirit, but its concrete, personal embodiment. So Krishna, speaking as the Eternal Spirit, says to Arjuna: "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate."

We should now be in a better position to understand what is meant when we translate "chêlaship" as spiritual childhood. It implies that the chêla has entered into the spiritual life, and that he has a Father—mature in the spiritual life. But it implies more than that, for that would be equally true of the infant, and there is a distinction between infancy and childhood.

Perhaps we are born as spiritual "infants" from the moment that we resolve, consciously and irrevocably, to claim citizenship in the spiritual world, giving our undivided loyalty to its laws and aims, so that, however often we fail to maintain its standards, we never cease to struggle to maintain

them, and are no longer of doubtful will. Let us say that this is "birth", —though the mystery of birth must go far deeper. Between birth and childhood, however, intervenes the period of infancy, in which the little one, dependent at every point upon his parents (or upon those who stand in the place of his parents), has not yet learned to recognize them or to identify the source from which his needs are met. He must first gain the control and use of his senses and faculties; and until he has himself accomplished this, his universe must seem a very impersonal one. Food arrives, descending out of the blue at more or less regular intervals, more or less concomitantly with the increase of certain interior sensations which the food allays, and sometimes apparently expedited by sufficiently lusty wails. The same wails may tend to remove other ills—such as stray or misdirected pins —but, on the whole, the infant's world must be a place where things just come, and you have to learn to take them as they come. It is by taking them as they come, by using them for his own growing life, that his faculties are developed. The parallels between this and the rudimentary stages of the religious life are obvious and need not be elaborated. Such spiritual infancy is not childhood or chêlaship.

Physical childhood, as distinct from infancy, is marked by the facts that the use of the senses has been gained, that parents or nurses are recognized, and that the child is conscious of his own relation to them and of his membership as one of his own particular family. The child's world is no longer an impersonal world. He may still be very largely ignorant of the grown-up world, and of the actual interests and labours of grown men and women; but he is not ignorant of their existence, nor of the fact that it is through them that his needs are met and his own life guided and ruled. At just what point infancy passes into childhood it would be difficult to say. The infant *becomes* the child, and any process of becoming is a gradual one. Only after the transition has been made can it be recognized and the difference perceived. But it is noteworthy that our adult memories do not reach back to infancy. At the earliest point they touch, we see ourselves as children, conscious of our parents and of our membership in the family; and it is probable that these earliest memories mark the completion of the transformation, —in a certain sense the completion of "birth", for the infancy that lay behind it is as veiled to our adult consciousness as is the pre-natal state itself. It is from that point that our personal consciousness has been of the same kind as it is now, and that our adult life has arisen. It is the same in the spiritual life. The spiritual infant must grow into, must become, the spiritual child, the chêla, through acquiring the use of his spiritual senses and faculties, through the recognition of his parents and guardians, and of his dependence on them, and through the realization of himself as a member of his own particular family. It is from that point that his adult spiritual life arises; and chêlaship is the growth, the pressing forward to that adult life.

There is need to remember, however, that when we translate from the speech of the East into that of the West and think of "chêla" as meaning "child",

we run grave risk of colouring our thought with all those connotations which childhood has for us to-day, and which are very different from those which it had in earlier times among Eastern peoples. There a son was supposed to be an asset, not a liability. His loyalty was to his father and his family; not to himself. He went where they went, served them and those they served. Tasks and responsibilities were assumed by him as soon as he had strength to accomplish them; and it was through these that he was taught and grew to manhood. There could be no more complete antithesis to chêlaship than the spoiled child—too often considered normal to-day—who looks to his father only to supply the capital for his self-indulgences, and turns to home only for shelter, and to escape the consequences of his acts.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

In general one only asks advice so as not to follow it; or if one do follow it, so as to reproach the person who gave it.—A. DUMAS.

As nothing reveals character like the company we keep, so nothing foretells futurity like the thoughts over which we brood.—NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

FEW of us know why we joined. Most of us know how, and we like to think that is why, and to tell it. It is easier to tell about those things we do not understand than about those things we do understand. In the former case, we have all the latitude in the world; in the latter, the limitations are unromantically indisputable and definite.

Yet—we do know that we were led into The Theosophical Society by a favouring and watchful guidance, and we will not permit anyone to persuade us that it was a "fortuitous happening". Do we not look down—deep down into ourselves—and make every sincere, silent effort to respond to Those who call for what belongs to Them (mark those words: we belong to Them); and are we not grateful in feeling that we have heard that call?

Just like yourselves, I cannot recall the past, and, if I could, I should very likely be astounded at some of its personal assortments and combinations and interrelations; but I do remember the occasion when He who regulates things in His own way for our best interest, first introduced me at this time. That introduction made it easy for me to "sign up" many years later without a hesitating qualm.

It was some time in the summer after I was born. The fruit was still green on the trees, and there were also many flowers. My mother did just as they all do. Awaiting her opportunity one day when others of the household were away, she took me up to a vacant attic room, just to have me to herself to caress and fondle where none may see or observe or know—as she thought. What would she have said could she have seen this stranger, whom she thought she held in her arms, standing up in front and all around, filling the room, and also being without amongst the trees and the flowers?

Marvellously beautiful and vital is nature when we see it from the real side—responding to the charm of the spiritual world with silent, brilliant adoration, each kingdom and species in its own way, all joining in one worship of that exalted realm which induces all things to express their motives. Life, that day, was in every atom, in the sky, in the twitter of the birds which I could feel, but not hear, in the tremble of all the leaves, in the deep solid fragrance of the shrub, in the glowing self-confidence of the rose, in the perpendicular, unabashed height of the sun-flower, climbing up to its crown of glory.

My mother believed that her gestures, as she teased me, were gentleness itself; to me, they contrasted violently with the glowing, peaceful, unified quietude of my world. Not quite here, I could not manipulate that brain nor control that body which she held on her lap. I begged her to be silent;

to hold me up: was not everything else looking up? But there was no fear, no resentment, no pain; only I was somewhat aghast at this strange person who made such unlimited assumptions—who took such liberties. I helplessly pawed the air and clutched at heaven—only to grasp the world while she poured on me all the joy of her heart; unknowingly she blessed me and overwhelmed me with the Master's happiness and love. And so that day I accepted—I joined; under protest, but without pain or sorrow.

That is all for that—because children grow up. As they grow up, they grow down—down into a personality to forget (almost—not quite). As they begin to grow away from their mothers, the world comes forward and "mothers" them with the insistent effrontery of its learning, its culture, its "standards", and its blinding infamy.

Then Those who wait and watch must again have recourse to appropriate methods to remind us of what we must not forget. Do you not remember how, when you were children, and houses were not well heated, good housekeepers covered all the floors with heavy carpets after first spreading newspapers on the boards, and how they always took the carpets up for spring cleaning?

I hark back to one of those spring cleanings. Carpets up, newspapers gathered together and piled in a heap in the corner, and myself wandering about the house disturbed and disconcerted by the confusion. I rummaged amongst those old papers and found myself trying to read an illustrated article (it was the illustration that caught my eye) about Theosophy, theosophical "intelligences", Adepts, akasha, "reincarnating once every three thousand years"—my word, what a "find" for a small boy! I guess thirty to fifty per cent of the English words were not in my vocabulary; nevertheless, I understood enough to make an indelible impression, more than enough to evoke a deep and mysterious interest, and to recall to me the peculiar memories of that day when my mother magnetized me and drew me in. Suddenly feeling that I possessed something of real worth and value, I instinctively secreted the paper with the mental reservation to seek the first favourable opportunity to sneak it out and read it again in secret.

Fortunately for me, my "find" was too well hidden. Had I found it, I should have "learned it", and have fixed certain errors and false impressions in my mind until it got stale. How well I remember, during my persistent search, that I *constantly* satisfied my anxiety by having recourse to the original fascinating, illusive impressions until the yearning for "Theosophy" sank into the marrow. Oh, how we crave those things which are taken from us!

But children keep on growing up, and down, and the world continues to "mother" them.

A few years later:—I am playing with my boyhood friends. In a corner of the garden is a new-made pile of discarded books waiting to be carted away. We bombard each other with those old books to our hearts' content, until the lawn and flower beds are covered with leaves and "scraps of paper". With all our ammunition used up, the game is "busted". We pause; there is a

momentary relaxation—a letting go—waiting for something else to happen, for some one to "start something". As I stand still, abstractedly and unabsorbed, I slowly realize that one of my companions has his eye warily on a book cover that I unconsciously hold in my hand. Now, it is or was customary for bookbinders to paste paper on the round of the margins of the leaves to hold the stitches firm, and also on the inside of that part of the cover or back which rounds against the stitched margins of the leaves. As I looked at that cover fragment which I involuntarily (?) held, I observed that the paper pasted on the inside was a fragment of printed matter, and my eye caught the word "Karmendriyas". I knew where I had seen that before; like lightning the memory of the lost newspaper and of the never-to-be-forgotten summer day, flashed up into my mind. Fearing detection and catechizing, I quickly dashed it down, but not before full advantage had been taken of my abstraction, and my memory and interest in mysterious theosophical things had again been sharpened and stirred to the depths.

Am I romancing if I say—incredibly skilful watchfulness and kindness to catch me just in the moment of abstraction, and spring a reminder on me? That episode drove things home deep and clinched them. Thereafter I would voluntarily recall those illusive impressions, and ponder on them and yearn for more.

What of religion? Yes: I was sent to Sunday School in the good old regulation way, with the standard offering each Sunday; admonitions, catechism, hymns, Bible study 'n everything. Annual Christmas party with its boxes of candy and oranges and sticks of peppermint, which we stuck in our oranges and sucked. Did you not do the same? What? You did not? Now the saints preserve you—your childhood was neglected. The place was good, and, as usual, discipline too lax even to evoke misbehaviour. The Sunday School not only had me for years, but for the best years; yet with its almost total spiritual blindness it could not match the few incisive strokes given just at the right time, at the right place, in the right way.

Visitors came to our home, when I was about eighteen years of age, from another city. They stayed a long time, and, while there, formed the acquaintance of a Russian artist who talked Theosophy to us. A great deal of my curiosity was satisfied; more was stimulated, and—well—I was easily drawn in. While the interest was still leading, and apprehensions and doubt at home were pending, I settled everything by asking for the usual application blank, and signed it.

Now please be careful. Of course we are all alike because we are not only ourselves, but also several others; nevertheless, your personal circumstances are peculiarly and exclusively your own, so, if you rip up a lot of carpets, and destroy a lot of valuable books, and get left and don't catch me, I am afraid you will not get much sympathy.

B.

CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

PART I, SECTIONS 1–6

THE POWERS OF THE LOGOS

THE great Upanishads were compiled as Instructions for disciples preparing for Initiation. They contain philosophical teaching, and also many stories, generally in the form of spirited dialogues, of great beauty and eloquence, or ironical, but always radiant with spiritual wisdom. If we think of what is here translated as a part of these Instructions, we shall have little difficulty in understanding its significance.

The theme is the Logos, the divine creative Word, which Philo called the Mind of God, with its progressive manifestation in the Universe and in the Spirit of man. Further, the Sections here translated were especially designed for disciples who knew the Sama Veda. If we remember that the Sama Veda is a collection of hymns which are in effect magical incantations, and that the lines which make up these hymns are in the main taken from the hymns of the Rig Veda and set to music, we shall be able to understand most of the allusions, which were familiar to these disciples.

The Logos as a unity, as the divine One, is represented by the syllable "Om", as pronounced with vibration of magical potency. So the divine Word vibrates, sounding with magical potency, and from its sounding the Universe is made manifest. In the highest manifestation, the One becomes Three: the mystery of the Trinity in Unity. In the text here translated, this Highest Triad is symbolized by the form of chant called "Ud-gi-tha", here rendered by the three words, "Loud Chant Song", to suggest its threefold nature. The Sanskrit word generally translated "syllable" literally means "that which cannot be diminished", and is, therefore, a fitting term for the divine One, as well as for Om as a unit of speech.

Om, then, symbolizes the One, first made manifest as the Triad, here represented as the Loud Chant Song. Then come the progressive manifestations of the Triad through emanation. The text carries us at once to the outermost or lowest emanation, here called "elemental Earth", to be thought of, not as brute matter, but rather as the crystallization or consolidation of Spirit, to be raised again to its divine form by the progressive infusion of Spirit; just as ice becomes water, steam, invisible vapour, by the infusion of heat. Therefore, we are told that "of elemental Earth the Waters are the essence"; the Waters are the principle of Life, or Prana, that form of Spirit which first acts on Matter, causing the first transformation from mineral into organic Matter, here described as "the Growths", the earlier forms of plant and animal life. After these earlier forms comes Man, of whom "creative Voice is the essence";

this is the ray of the Logos, "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It is regarded as a divine perceptive power, and also a power of action, symbolized by the magical energy of a divine invocation or incantation. So we come to the Rig Veda from which are taken the invocations of the Sama Veda, and thence to the Loud Chant Song, symbolizing the divine Triad in man and in the Universe. Thus the wave of manifestation returns to its source; the divine cycle is completed. So the disciples were taught to regard the manifested Universe and the Spirit within themselves as the magnificent music of the divine creative Word, the Logos.

The true Light lighteth every man that cometh into the world, whether he recognize that Light or not. So there are those who know and those who know not; but "what he accomplishes through wisdom, that, verily, possesses greater virtue."

Then comes the parable of the Bright Powers and the Dark Powers. Since this is teaching for disciples, there is no attempt to reveal the ultimate origin of evil; more important for them is the existence of evil, and its potential presence within themselves. So they were told an ancient tale which shows that every power, though in essence divine, holds within it the possibility of misuse, and therefore of evil. For example, because the Dark Powers pierced Mind with evil, we can form imaginations which corrupt as well as imaginations which stimulate and raise us. Then, when all the powers of man are purified, so that his consciousness is raised to the higher Triad, the Dark Powers in vain assail this divine being; they are shattered as a clod of earth which is dashed against a firm rock. The life of man has risen above duality; he no longer discerns "odorous or malodorous, for he has cast away evil." Then, perhaps, he is fitted to comprehend "the origin of evil", and the part which evil plays in the manifestation and dissolution of worlds. Another universal symbol is used in the sentence, "Whatsoever through this principal Life he eats or drinks, through this he guards the lesser lives": to eat means to gain bodily experience; to drink means to gain mental, or subjective, experience. When, through the "principal Life", the Higher Self, all the powers have been purified, then all experience is sanctified, he eats and drinks consecrated elements, as in the Sacrament. All experience, purified and ordered by the Higher Self, makes for spiritual wisdom and power. Thus his experience ministers to "the lesser lives", the different powers manifested by the Spirit. But he who, "at the time of the end", at death, has not consciously brought himself under the guidance of the Higher Self, is said to "depart" along the weary pathway of compelled rebirth.

In the sentences which end this Section are a series of names, like Angiras and Brihaspati. In the original, there is in each case a play on words; they seem, therefore, to be mnemonics, to fix in the memory of the disciple the essence of the teaching which has gone before.

In the following Section, the Sun, as always in the Mystery teaching, is the great visible symbol of the Logos, as in the eloquent verse "the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." Here, the Sun is likened

to the principal Life, which is the Logos and the Higher Self, as an undivided part of the Logos. When the Sun rises, "he sings aloud for beings": it is the ancient tradition of the music of the spheres, echoing the divine music of the creative Word. The Sun is spoken of as fire, and also as "Sound and returning Sound." There is the thought of the Sun as vibrating forth perpetual energy, and also as being not the source of that energy, but as reflecting it from the true source, the Logos; thus radiating energy as a cliff sends forth an echo.

In the next paragraph, the "distributive Life", which binds together the forward Life and the downward Life, seems to correspond to the power called Fohat, which is in a sense the intermediary between Spirit and Matter. This balanced force gives the magical energy to the Sama chant, and to "whatever other works there are possessing strong virtue."

Then the primordial Triad, symbolized by the Loud Chant Song, is correlated with other triads, as Heaven-Interspace-Earth, Sun-Breath-Fire. The sentences enjoining the singer of the chant to seek refuge in the Sama, the Rig, the Seer, the Divinity, the measure, the song-form and the region to which he is to chant a hymn of praise, show the division into seven closely interrelated principles or phases of the chant, and thus stand as a symbol of every sevenfold manifestation of the Logos, including sevenfold man. Finally, he draws close to the divine Self which sent him forth, and there is good hope that his heart's desire will be fulfilled.

The same return to the divine source and home is taught in the parable of the Bright Powers and Death. The Bright Powers are the divine forces of manifestation, embodied in the descending series of emanations. In the outer and lower emanations, in the more material aspects of life, they are subject to Death, for all material forms are of necessity mortal. Then, with the great return toward Spirit, the divine energy ascended through the emanations, here symbolized as the Rig verse, the Sama chant, the Yajur sentence; they entered into the "magical vibration" which is the first and highest manifestation of the Logos, and thus, reunited with the being of the Logos, they became immortal, fearless. So also he who, thus knowing, enters into the being of the Logos, thereby is immortal.

Then comes the mysterious story of Kaushitaki and his only son. It would seem to picture the task of the disciple, since the spiritual man is spoken of as a son. When that son has been born and attains his strength, he manifests many powers, here described again as sons. As the text has been handed down, it reads, when the sentence recurs, "then mine (my sons) shall be many", instead of reading, as before, "then thy sons shall be many". If this ancient reading be correct, it implies that the many powers of the spiritual man are the powers of the disciple after he has attained. And this would be in full accord with spiritual reality, for there is no solution of continuity; the disciple becomes the adept, he is not replaced by the adept. This story ends with a sentence in form equally mysterious: "Thus knowing, that which has been ill chanted from the station of the sacrificial priest, he perfectly fulfils";

the meaning seems to be that, when he has attained, he does perfectly that which, as a struggling disciple, he had done imperfectly; the immortal completes the imperfect work of the mortal.

It has already been noted that the Sama chants are for the most part Rig verses turned into magical song, infused with the vibration which gives them magical potency. So it is said that "the Sama chant rests upon the Rig verse". This relation is used as a symbol of an inspiring force within a vehicle or vesture. Thus the fire of Life is breathed into "earth", as in the story in Genesis, forming living beings. So the great Breath blows through the "interspace"; in one sense, it is the electrical energy in the air which gives birth to the thunderstorm, but it is also the whole sum of energies which move in space. "Earth, interspace, heavens, lunar mansions" are symbols of four planes in ascending order; each is shown as infused and energized by a co-ordinate power, here symbolized by "the fire of Life, the great Breath, the Sun, the Moon", and in each case we are told that the relation between the plane and the force which energizes it is like the relation between Rig and Sama: between the verse of a hymn and the same verse energized by magical vibration.

Then we come again to the Sun as symbol of the Logos. There is the outer white radiance of the Sun, called the photosphere. Beneath and within this is the darker body, in part revealed when a section of the photosphere is torn aside by an electrical cyclone which causes a sunspot: the inner Sun, which is the storehouse of solar energy, with the photosphere upheld by it as the words of the Rig hymn are upheld by the magical vibration of the chant.

Finally, we have the symbolic representation of the Sun as the "divine Man, golden-coloured", like the Ancient of Days in the Apocalypse, whose "eyes were as a flame of fire"; an image of the tremendous potency of the creative Logos.

THE DIVINE CREATIVE WORD

OM: As this unchanging Sound he should reverence the Loud Chant Song; for beginning with Om, he chants the Loud Song. This is its expansion:

Of manifested beings, elemental Earth is the essence.

Of elemental Earth, the Waters are the essence.

Of the Waters, the Growths are the essence.

Of the Growths, man is the essence.

Of Man, creative Voice is the essence.

Of creative Voice, the hymn of the Rig Veda is the essence.

Of the hymn of the Rig Veda, the chant of the Sama Veda is the essence.

Of the chant of the Sama Veda, the Loud Chant Song is the essence.

For the Loud Chant Song is of these essences the supreme essence, the spiritual antetype, the eighth in number.

Which is the Rig? Which is the Sama? Which is the Loud Chant Song? —thus it is considered.

Creative Voice, verily, is the Rig; Life-breath is the Sama; the unchanging Sound Om is the Loud Chant Song. These, then, are a creative pair: Voice and Life-breath; Rig and Sama. Then this creative pair is joined together in the unchanging Sound Om. For when the creative pair come together, they mutually fulfil desire.

He is a fulfiller of desires who, thus knowing this, reverences the Loud Chant Song as the unchanging Sound.

Then, verily, this unchanging Sound is affirmation. For when one affirms anything, he says "Om!" Affirmation is obtaining. He is an obtainer of desires who, thus knowing this, reverences the Loud Chant Song as the unchanging Sound.

Through this unchanging Sound the threefold wisdom acts. With Om, one calls aloud; with Om, one praises; with Om, one sings the Loud Chant, for the honour of this unchanging Sound, because of its might, because of its essence.

Therefore both accomplish work, he who thus knows and he who knows not. But different are wisdom and unwisdom; what he accomplishes through wisdom, through faith, through the secret teaching, that, verily, possesses greater virtue.

This, in truth, is the expansion of this unchanging Sound.

When the Bright Powers and the Dark Powers strove against each other, both coming forth from the Lord of beings, the Bright Powers laid hold on the Loud Chant Song, saying, "Through this we shall overcome them!"

Then they reverenced the Life-breath in the nostrils as the Loud Chant Song. Then the Dark Powers pierced it with evil. Therefore, through this, one smells both odorous and malodorous, for this is pierced with evil.

And so they reverenced creative Voice as the Loud Chant Song. Then the Dark Powers pierced it with evil. Therefore, through this, one speaks both truth and untruth, for this is pierced with evil.

And so they reverenced Vision as the Loud Chant Song. Then the Dark Powers pierced it with evil. Therefore, through this, one sees both seemly and unseemly, for this is pierced with evil.

And so they reverenced Hearing as the Loud Chant Song. Then the Dark Powers pierced it with evil. Therefore, through this, one hears both what should be heard and what should not be heard, for this is pierced with evil.

And so they reverenced Mind as the Loud Chant Song. Then the Dark Powers pierced it with evil. Therefore, through this, one imagines both what should be imagined and what should not be imagined, for this is pierced with evil.

And so this which is the principal Life they reverenced as the Loud Chant Song. Striking it, the Dark Powers fell in pieces, as one would fall in pieces striking against a firm rock. Just as, striking a firm rock, one would fall in pieces, so he falls in pieces who desires evil for one who thus knows, or who seeks to harm him, for such a one is a firm rock.

Nor, verily, through this principal Life does he discern odorous or malodorous, for this has cast away evil. Whatsoever through this he eats or drinks, through this he guards the lesser lives. So, verily, at the end, not finding this principal Life, he departs, at the time of the end he gives up the ghost.

Angiras, verily, reverenced the principal Life as the Loud Chant Song. Indeed they think that it is Angiras, for it is the essence of the members.

Therefore, verily, Brihaspati reverenced this as the Loud Chant Song. Indeed they think that it is Brihaspati, the Great Lord, for creative Voice is great, whereof this is lord.

Therefore, verily, Ayasya reverenced this as the Loud Chant Song. Indeed they think that it is Ayasya, because it proceeds from the mouth.

Therefore, verily, this Baka son of Dalbhya knew. He became master of chants for the people of Naimisha. Of old he sang for them their desires.

He, verily, is a singer of desires who, thus knowing this, reverences it as the Loud Chant Song. So far concerning the Self.

And so concerning the Bright Powers. He who gleams in the sky, him one should reverence as the Loud Chant Song. When he rises, verily, he sings aloud for beings. When he rises, he drives away darkness and fear. He, verily, drives away fear and darkness, who thus knows.

This principal Life and that Sun are alike. For this is fire and that is fire. This principal Life they designate as Sound, and that Sun as Sound and as returning Sound. Therefore, let him reverence the one and the other as the Loud Chant Song.

And so, in truth, one should reverence the distributive Life as the Loud Chant Song. When he breathes forth, this is the forward Life-breath; when he breathes downward, this is the downward Life-breath. And so that which is the binding together of the forward Life-breath and the downward Life-breath—this is the distributive Life-breath, this is creative Voice. Therefore, without breathing forward, without breathing downward, he sends forth creative Voice. That which is creative Voice, that is the Rig verse. Therefore, without breathing forward, without breathing downward, he sends forth the Rig verse. That which is the Rig verse, that is the Sama chant. Therefore, without breathing forward, without breathing downward, he sings the Sama chant. That which is the Sama, that is the Loud Chant Song. Therefore, without breathing forward, without breathing downward, he chants the Loud Chant Song.

And so, whatever other works there are possessing strong virtue, such as kindling fire with the fire-sticks, running a course, drawing a firm bow, these he accomplishes without breathing forward, without breathing downward. For this cause, one should reverence the distributive Life-breath as the Loud Chant Song.

And so, in truth, one should reverence the unchanging sounds of the Loud Chant Song: that is, the syllables Loud, Chant, Song. The forward Life-breath is "Loud", for through the forward Life-breath one arises; creative

Voice is "Chant", for they call chants voices; the World-food is "Song", for in the World-food all stands.

Heaven verily, is "Loud"; Interspace is "Chant"; Earth is "Song". Sun, verily, is "Loud"; great Breath is "Chant"; Fire-lord is "Song". Sama Veda, verily, is "Loud"; Yajur Veda is "Chant"; Rig Veda is "Song". Creative Voice milks for him that milk which is the milk of Voice; food-possessing, a food-eater is he who, knowing thus, reverences these unchanging sounds of the Loud Chant Song; that is, the syllables Loud, Chant, Song.

And so, in truth, concerning the fulfilment of hopes. These one should reverence as refuges:

One should seek refuge in the Sama chant with which he is to chant a hymn of praise. He should seek refuge in the Rig hymn from which the Sama is formed, in the Seer who sang it, in the Divinity whom he is to praise,—in this Divinity he should seek refuge.

One should seek refuge in the measure with which he is to chant a hymn of praise. He should seek refuge in the song-form with which he is to chant a hymn of praise. He should seek refuge in the region toward which he is to chant a hymn of praise.

Finally, drawing close to the divine Self, he should sing praise, steadily meditating on his desire. Then there is good hope that that desire is fulfilled, desiring which he may sing praise,—desiring which he may sing praise.

Om: let him reverence this unchanging Sound as the Loud Chant Song. This is the expansion of it.

The Bright Powers, verily, fearing Death, went forth into the triune Wisdom of the Veda. They covered themselves with the musical measures. Because with these they covered themselves, this is the musical quality of the measures. But Death perceived them there as one may perceive a fish in the water. They then, discovering this, went forth from the Rig verse, the Sama chant and the Yajur sentence, and entered into the magical vibration.

When, verily, one completes a Rig verse, he adds the magical vibration, Om; so also the Sama chant; so also the Yajur sentence. This magical vibration is that unchanging Sound, Om. Going forth into that, the Bright Powers were immortal, fearless.

He who, thus knowing this, intones that unchanging Sound, goes forth into that unchanging Sound, the magical vibration, immortal, fearless. Going forth into that, as the Bright Powers were immortal, so is he immortal.

And so, verily, that which is the Loud Chant Song, that is the intoned unchanging Sound; that which is the intoned unchanging Sound, that is the Loud Chant Song. That heavenly Sun is the Loud Chant Song, he is the intoned unchanging Sound; for intoning the magical vibration, Om, he goes onward.

"Him, verily, I have praised in song, therefore thou, my son, art one only."

Thus Kaushitaki addressed his son. "But do thou meditate upon the rays; then thine shall be many." So far concerning the Bright Powers.

And so concerning the Self. He who is the principal Life, him one should reverence as the Loud Chant Song; for intoning the magical vibration, Om, he goes onward.

"Him, verily, I have praised in song, therefore thou, my son, art one only." Thus Kaushitaki addressed his son. "But do thou meditate upon the Lives as many; then mine shall be many."

And so, verily, that which is the Loud Chant Song, that is the intoned unchanging Sound; that which is the intoned unchanging Sound, that is the Loud Chant Song. Thus knowing, that which has been ill chanted from the station of the sacrificial priest, he perfectly fulfils,—he perfectly fulfils.

This earth, verily, is the Rig verse; the fire of Life is the Sama chant. This Sama chant rests upon the Rig verse. Therefore, the Sama chant is sung resting upon the Rig verse. This earth is Sa; the fire of Life is Ama. This makes Sama.

The interspace, verily, is the Rig verse; the great Breath is the Sama. This Sama chant rests upon the Rig verse. Therefore, the Sama chant is sung resting upon the Rig verse. The interspace is Sa; the great Breath is Ama. This makes Sama.

The heavens, verily, are the Rig verse; the Sun is the Sama chant. This Sama chant rests upon the Rig verse. Therefore, the Sama chant is sung resting upon the Rig verse. The heavens are Sa; the Sun is Ama. This makes Sama.

The lunar mansions, verily, are the Rig verse; the Moon is the Sama chant. This Sama chant rests upon the Rig verse. Therefore, the Sama chant is sung resting upon the Rig verse. The lunar mansions are Sa; the Moon is Ama. This makes Sama.

And so that which is the white radiance of the Sun is the Rig verse; the indigo-coloured, very dark, is the Sama chant. This Sama chant rests upon the Rig verse. Therefore, the Sama chant is sung resting upon the Rig verse. The white radiance is Sa; the indigo-coloured, very dark, is Ama. This makes Sama.

And so this divine Man, golden-coloured, who is seen within the Sun, has a golden beard and golden hair, even to the tips of the nails he is all as bright gold. As is the golden lotus, so are his two eyes. His name is the Highest, for He is raised on high above all evils. He who thus knows, rises, verily, above all evils. The Rig verse and the Sama chant are His two songs. Therefore, the Loud Chant Song is His. Therefore, he who sings the Loud Chant Song is named Chanter, for he is the singer of this. He is Lord of the realms beyond that Sun, and of the desires of the Bright Powers. So far concerning the Bright Powers.

C. J.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Student is never solemn. The rest of us, when we first met after the Convention, were feeling, if not solemn, in any case somewhat subdued; for although our verdict, if put to it, would probably have been that it would rank as the deepest and best of the Conventions held so far, the fact remained that many of us had been active participants,—and can anyone be satisfied with his contribution when he knows that life itself would not be too much to give, and when necessarily he measures his mite against the single Word which would "put the spirit of a lion into a dead fox"? We must learn, however, when reviewing the past, not only to see where we fell short of our own ideal, that we may approach it more nearly when similar conditions recur, but so to detach ourselves from the picture that we can see the event as a whole, and thus gauge its total effect on the different planes of being.

"It was a great success", said the Ancient; "due in large measure to unity of spirit, to self-forgetfulness, to trust. Distant Branches of the Society, and members who are not able to attend in person, are participating more and more,—many of them devoting the whole day to intellectual and spiritual co-operation with us, for love of the Masters, for love of their Cause. This is a distinct addition to our Conventions, because such contributions are likely to be impersonal in the real sense of the word."

"At first", the Student remarked, "it made me feel as if I were something the dog had brought in and intended to bury later on, when he had time. I quickly reacted from that, however, and after a glance at the Empyrean, just to remind myself it was still there, I tried to hold on to that recognition with one hand, and to the feeling of being 'yon object' with the other,—and then, to think. The result—with the Convention still working in me—was quite illuminating; or in any case I found it so. 'You can and must become a chêla,' they had said,—for that seemed to me to be the keynote of everything that was said. From one hand, dismally, something murmured, 'Impossible!' From the other hand, serenely, something whispered, 'There is nothing real in you except that which is chêla already.' And there was I, sitting in the middle! First, and deliberately, I examined the voice that said 'Impossible', for I knew enough, on general principles, to be sure that this came from below, and it had been suggested at Convention that it is far easier to study the make-up and ways of our lower nature than of the higher. Near by, it sounded like a single voice; but I recalled its instigations of the past, and examined them, to find that instead of a single voice, scores of different voices had blended, as the strands of a rope unite to make it one. An incident of several months ago came back to me: a decision, and a wrong decision. It was child's-play, at that distance, to separate the converging but

separate strands: there was sloth, and the desire for comfort; there were the different promptings of Rajas; and then, turning quickly to look at the stifled protest from above, I found that it, too, instead of being a single voice, had been made up of a multitude,—pleading, warning, reminding, threatening. 'It looks as if the difference of one vote did it,' I said to myself. Then, in a flash: 'A house divided against itself, surely; but the government rests with the majority, and every decision you make, from morning till night—what you wear and eat and say and do or leave undone—is the result of a poll; and a single vote may decide it. Kill or convert one of those swinish elementals, and you might reverse the polarity of the whole business. One vote out of hundreds—probably thousands—may be all that is needed to pitch you headlong into chêlaship!' And the same thing is true of others. We think we're a million miles from it—a paralyzing projection of our rationalistic or wiseacre or false-humility litter—when our actual experience proves that there may be no more than one miserable and already half-starved elemental —perhaps no more than the wilting Willy who keeps on saying, 'I'm so tired; I'm so tired'—tottering between us and Victory! If it's the last straw that breaks the camel's back, and the last drop that finally capsizes the boat, it's also the last bite at his shackles that sets the prisoner free,—just the thousandth of an inch between himself and liberty!"

The Ancient beamed at him. "A happy thought", he said. "There may be those who will act on it." Then, after a pause,—quizzically: "I hope you will!"

"There was more laughter during Convention than at any I have attended before. It was odd." The Philosopher interjected this, evidently seeking an explanation.

"Tears and laughter are not far removed", suggested the Historian. "Sometimes I think there must be much laughter in the Lodge. A man who fought in Mesopotamia during the war, told me that when all his brother officers had been killed, and he was left with a handful of men, most of them wounded, and every hope gone,—jokes had poured out of him for the first time in his life, quite spontaneously, and that his men had responded as if they hadn't a care in the world."

"What became of him, incidentally?" asked the Student.

"They fought on, and were rescued: help from Headquarters."

"Good omen!"

"That depends upon the point of view", the Historian retorted. "You don't stop to ask what the rescue cost the rescuers,—or how the rescued felt about it! So far as we are concerned, the Convention, in spite of its 'success', would be a tragic failure *unless we fought our way through.*"

"Translate, translate!" the Student protested.

"Quite unnecessary", replied the Historian. "What was the Convention about, anyhow! The point is that as the fruit of a united aspiration, of a common, unselfish effort,—someone shall break through to carry the Light forward,—to 'keep the link unbroken', as H. P. B. phrased it. Only a chêla

can do that,—but he need not be a chêla of high degree. The only requisite is that he shall be a product of what has already been produced,—a child of the inner life of The Theosophical Society. Possibly he is not yet in our ranks, —though I hope he is—several of him! You will remember, however, the Parable of the labourers in the vineyard. Pray heaven there be no murmuring should the last again prove to be first. I do not think there would be. Jealousy is a very low and vulgar fault. It seems to me that our present membership is extraordinarily free from it. Those who win through will be the first to acknowledge, and with joy, that they owe their *liberty* to the sacrifice and devotion of the many, who for years have toiled, apparently unrecognized and unrewarded,—and who have not toiled for pennies, not even for spiritual pennies, but solely for love of the Lord of the vineyard, and of the high and noble ends for which he labours."

"Any criticisms of the Convention?" asked the Recorder.

"Several", the Student replied promptly. "For one thing, I do not think that nearly enough was said under the head of misconceptions, which flourish like weeds, while truths of any kind cannot so much as stay alive unless ceaselessly tended and trimmed, watered and cultivated, shielded and sprayed. How, otherwise, can a truth live in this world—truth being of the Spirit! I know that I, for one, sprout misconceptions overnight. A few I have torn up by the roots; others I am cultivating lovingly, vigorously, as if they were choice plants,—roses or what not. I believe I have as good an understanding of chêlaship, for instance, as most students of Theosophy. I know that it involves becoming consciously the pupil of one who has attained to Wisdom, that is to say, a Master. I have bravely amputated the idea that a chêla is one who 'might have descended from a long line of maiden aunts.' But I often suspect that I should be better off mentally if my mind, on that subject, were bare soil, thoroughly worked over with lime, than I am to-day with the miscellaneous vegetation which encumbers it."

"My friend", said the Ancient, "while what you say is true enough as applied to some people, I am afraid that in your case the trouble is different and perhaps more serious: I am afraid that you know a great deal more than you do,—which is only another way of saying that you are self-indulgent and lazy."

This was plain speech indeed; but the Student did not flinch. He is devoted to the Ancient, and the Ancient to him; besides which, whatever his faults, he never quarrels. "I plead guilty", he said; "but I stick to my point none the less: I think that more ought to have been said at the Convention about misconceptions of Theosophy, including the farcical pretensions of those who unwarrantably use the name. Have you heard of Mrs. Besant's latest? Having discovered 'the great world father', or 'world teacher', in the person of Krishnamurti, she now announces that the Brahmin wife of an Englishman —a Mrs. Rukmini Arundale—is the 'great world mother'; and she makes this announcement as 'President of the Theosophical Society'! I wish she would call herself 'Pope of the Universal Church', or 'Empress of the United

Indies', and have done with it. Her unconscious *bouffonneries* would kill Theosophy if anything could. No wonder that misinformed people, who accept her claims and the claims of her followers at their face value, and who imagine, therefore, that she represents in some way the movement of Madame Blavatsky and Judge,—despise Theosophy and all its supposed works."

"Well", said the Philosopher, "I suppose, in the last analysis, all of us select our own gods, and it seems to me to be good Theosophy to do so; but Mrs. Besant's mania for selecting gods for other people, though humorous, would be neither original nor noteworthy, if she did not call herself a Theosophist while doing it. No need to worry about her followers; they want that sort of thing, or they would not follow her. No need to worry about her gods either. Some people would rather appear ridiculous than not appear at all. No, there would be nothing serious about it, from first to last, if it were not for the harm she does to a word—Theosophy—which we have such good reason to respect and love. The more she misuses it, the greater our obligation to defend it,—above all, by trying to exemplify it in the sanity of our own lives."

The Historian now closed the subject. "I fully agree", he said; "but you don't understand Mrs. Besant: she's just playing with dolls,—again." His emphasis on "again", made his meaning sufficiently clear.

"Enough said", the Recorder commented; then, turning to the Student: "You have other criticisms of the Convention?"

"Yes", replied the Student; "I have: I wish that something had been said about misdirected effort. I believe that a great deal of honest effort goes to waste. There are members who work at themselves, year after year, from a strong sense of duty—the study of Theosophy having convinced them that they should strive to conquer their faults, and to move as far as they can along the path of spiritual progress—but who never seem to get anywhere. I have my eye on the Philosopher: comment, please!"

"The aim of such members, as you have defined it", the Philosopher replied, "sounds to me to be dreadfully soggy. I don't wonder they never get anywhere! 'To move as far as they can along the path of spiritual progress'; that's just it. Listen: Smith met Brown in a London fog. 'Where are you going, Brown?' he asked. 'Oh, I'm tramping along, tramping along', Brown answered. 'Where are you going to?' 'As far as I can', said Brown. 'Where do you expect to land?' asked Smith. 'I don't know', said Brown. I am afraid that is very much like the efforts of some students of Theosophy,—and of other students too, for that matter. It would be wiser to hold on to a lamp-post until they find out where they are!

"It would be better to dream dreams of scaling impossible heights, than to 'tramp along' in that resigned or lugubrious spirit; better still, to dream those dreams, with a definite objective for the next month's effort. Vagueness of aim, however, is not the only trouble. For lack of knowing where they are, or, to drop my simile, for lack of self-knowledge, people waste their time and energy in attacking a surface symptom, while leaving the disease untouched. Think of some man whose chief fault is egotism. He always thinks that he

knows better than others, and in any dispute or controversy, he is convinced that he is right. Even when forced to recognize that he was partly wrong, he will manage to convince himself that the balance of rightness rested in his favour. We will assume that at one time he was explosive in his annoyance when people opposed his will or his ideas; that, as a result of his explosiveness, he was constantly in trouble, and that he was brought at last to realize that he must try to control his tongue and his manners. Assume that he works at that with considerable success over a period of years, helped by the fact that whenever he does explode, he suffers. He has connected cause and effect to that extent. But he is supposed to be, and tells himself that he is, an aspirant for discipleship. Has he ever asked himself what causes the tendency to explode? If so, is it possible that his answer has been, 'Force of character', or 'Quick temper', rather than the truth, which is 'Egotism'? In any case we will assume that he remains blind, even intellectually, to his major defect; that it never occurs to him to connect what he suffers from his 'explosiveness', with its underlying cause; that, partly for this reason, he continues to like and to admire in himself the very trait which his best friends detest, and that he actually feeds his fault by his admiration of it, and therefore, of course, makes progress toward discipleship impossible. He is moving, in so far as he is acquiring self-control; but, like the man in the fog, he is moving in circles. At times he feels this, and becomes rather discouraged; but he quickly recovers from that, because fundamentally he has an opinion of himself which he has probably built up in the course of many lives,—a sense of superiority to others which it would take a surgical operation to remove, unless he should someday wake up sufficiently to begin the long labour of undermining it for himself. Oddly enough, an individual of that type can say in all sincerity that he knows he is a vile and miserable sinner, and perhaps will weep, with equal sincerity, when he thinks of some Master's sacrifice and suffering! Inevitably, of course, he reinforces his dominant vice by the inferences he draws from these performances. Everything serves that kind of mill as grist. It is omnivorous. Hopeless failure will be seen only in terms of the pluck with which it was endured. Life, in effect, has no lessons, except that the sense of superiority is uncommonly well founded.

"That is only one type out of many. My text is that we cannot expect to get anywhere in the spiritual life until we become sufficiently detached from the personality to see it with some measure of truth. Sweeping condemnation is just as unintelligent as self-satisfaction. If you need a horse and own one, and cannot exchange it for another, it is certainly wiser to get to know it, and its ways both good and bad, than to persuade yourself on the one hand that it's a gem, when it isn't, or to curse it all day long as useless, when you are compelled to use it all the time,—more especially in this case, seeing that it was you who made the brute,—with the joke again on you inasmuch as the same old horse, or, rather, what you make of him in this life, will turn up in your next life as the only means you will have, either to plough your fields or to drag your chariot through the skies."

"I'm sorry, but I'm mixed", said our Visitor. "Are you comparing the personality to a horse?"

"It is my fault, doubtless, if you are mixed", the Philosopher replied, laughing. "Some of us have a dreadful way of using analogies without explaining them,—a habit which I condemn strongly in others! Yes,—I was comparing the personality to a horse; I was trying to convey the idea that it ought to serve us as an instrument, and that we should study it with detachment, as we might study the good and bad points of a violin. I should have added that the human instrument—the personality—no matter how bad its points may be—an almost perfect devil if you choose—is not foreign to our own essential nature, seeing that all the force in it is the perversion of force from our own spirit, twisted from universal and divine, to personal ends. Most of us have bled our souls white, to feed our personalities and the elementals of which they so largely consist. What we need to do now is to retrieve the force, locked up in the personality; to turn it up, so to speak, back to its original purposes; to surrender our self-will wholly, in the smallest particulars; to disentangle, bit by bit, our sense of identity with all lower desires, personal ambitions, love of ease, of admiration, flattery, what not, and to transfer this sense of identity—our sense of self-hood—to the plane of the highest motives we can reach, there to fasten it permanently."

The Engineer now joined us. He looked really distressed,—so much so that someone asked him what was the trouble. In reply, he took from his pocket a cutting from the morning paper. "Sentimental pacificism is bad enough in this country", he said; "but that England should sink so low, grieves me beyond words. Something in my blood I suppose; an old pride of race that cries out when wounded. Think of it,—the celebration at Ostend of the tenth anniversary of the British attack on Ostend and Zeebrugge—the 'Vindictive'—one of the most splendid things in all history—several thousand British visitors crossing the Channel for the ceremonies—the Belgians making it their day as much as England's—speeches of course: then, at the end of the newspaper account, cabled from Brussels, this paragraph: 'Some surprise was expressed at the refusal of the British wireless station at Daventry to broadcast speeches at the ceremonies, on the ground that "war memorial services are contrary to the spirit of Locarno."' Daventry, I should explain, corresponds to the biggest of the broadcasting stations of the Radio Corporation of America, except that, unless I am very much mistaken, it is supervised by an appointee of the British Government. Can you imagine such insanity, or a worse betrayal of the heroic dead, or a greater insult to the heroic survivors, or a more fatuous exhibition of moral foppery, of undiluted 'goo'! Similar things, though not nearly so crude, have been done in America; but they have been done by Germans or Irish, or to cater to the Irish and German vote, and contemptible as that is, as anti-American as that is, I find it less offensive than the 'pure' motive which doubtless inspired the idiot or idiots at Daventry, just as I should find a cold-blooded murder committed for five dollars, less offensive than if committed for 'the pure love of God'.

Both kinds should be hung, but the 'pure' and pious murderer should be whipped through the streets first. The Daventry authorities should be treated on the same principle,—vigorously too. I know they do not represent the *real* England, any more than the Germans and Irish here, represent the real America; but I fear they represent England to about the same extent."

"Your news item is almost worth a cable to the London *Times*", the Historian commented. "Something like this: 'Referring Daventry and Ostend anniversary speeches, a loyal Christian urges no further public references to Crucifixion as likely revive feeling against Jews, contrary to spirit of Locarno (sob).' "

"I wish you would send it", said the Student.

"Useless", the Historian replied; "even slightly dangerous: Daventry and the Pacifists would think it an admirable suggestion. They might even introduce a bill in Parliament to give effect to it legally,—and heaven knows what Parliament would do with the bill,—probably compromise by allowing draped references to the Crucifixion, on Good Fridays and in Churches only. Things said in Churches don't really count, you know.

"Well, we must think of other signs of the times which tell a very different story; of such a book as *Religio Militis*, by Austin Hopkinson, which is really noble in spirit and purpose, and which I hope will be reviewed at length in the October issue of the QUARTERLY; and of such articles as those by C. O. G. Douie, entitled 'Memories of 1914–1918', which are appearing in *The Nineteenth Century and After* (probably the best of the English magazines). Sometimes I wonder whether, 'as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats', the King is not separating both nations and individuals, more effectively than was possible during the war. Men could then hide themselves in uniforms; others were swept along by the current of mob-emotion; while now the need for disguise is removed; the current of emotion, if there be any, runs toward Pacifism and the condonation of evil. In that sense, men are as naked as ever they are likely to be; they are not afraid to say what they think; and while it is true that such nakedness is always ugly, and that no man can rightly say anything until he is afraid to say anything, the fact remains that the present condition of things is almost ideal, if it be desired, as I am supposing, 'that the thoughts of many hearts' shall be revealed."

"I am sorry to change the subject", the Philosopher remarked at this point; "but I am anxious not to lose the opportunity of referring to what I said about *The Face of Silence*, that book by Dhan Gopal Mukerji, to which you gave a good deal of space in the last 'Screen'. You quoted me correctly as saying that 'the author is inclined to see things *couleur de rose*.' In order to determine, so far as possible, how much 'haze of glory' he had really added to the facts, either by omission or commission, I sent for two books about Rama Krishna, both published in India by his followers. One is entitled *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, or, The Ideal Man for India and for the World*, and the other and larger book (nearly 800 pages), *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*. These make it perfectly clear that the author omitted anything and everything

that would not be pleasing and attractive in his very interesting, stimulating and instructive picture of the life of a 'holy man' as lived in India. The testimony of Rama Krishna's most ardent native admirers proves—in any case to a student of Theosophy—that he was not even a chêla, much less a Mahatma; that he was a remarkable psychic who had been side-tracked by his psychism, and that, if further assurance were needed of India's present spiritual blindness, it could be found in the attribution of the title of Mahatma, Great Soul, to such men as Gandhi and the central figure of Mukerji's book. Take one fact out of hundreds that would demonstrate the truth of what I say: Rama Krishna was everlastingly going off into trances—in the midst of conversations and at any other time—over which he had no control whatever, and from which his disciples had to rouse him by shouting in his ear, or by violent shaking. There have been many Christian saints who were no better in that respect; but we know what to think of them—how far they were from chêlaship—and at best we can think no better of this 'holy man', though I must add that he was extraordinarily tolerant in his attitude toward those whose religious beliefs were different from his own."

"We are back at chêlaship again!" said the Recorder, "and I am going to introduce now, before we adjourn, my *pièce de résistance* on that subject. I appealed to Cavé for something of the kind—I am supposed to be unduly busy at this time—and Cavé, who already was swamped with other work, wrote what follows out of charity:—

"Much has been said and written on the subject of chêlaship; little understood. I remember in the old days that anyone who took up a vegetarian diet, wore his hair long, and would not kill a fly for *anything*, was considered as a probable lay-chêla, at least. And if he went to India—well that ended it; when he returned he surely was one. No wonder dear Judge often looked so wistful and so tired. Those were simple, innocent days enough,—the forms of misunderstanding were just so crude; but though the forms have changed, the misunderstanding still remains.

"I who have written much on the subject, should seem hardly the one to try it again, especially when others, far better qualified, have also apparently failed. The words are there, clear enough one would suppose; and yet over them rests some kind of an enchantment that prevents the great majority of readers from grasping their significance. Rather do strangely mistaken notions follow their perusal, if any definite notions at all. What emboldens me to another effort grows from my recalling to mind the initial experiences of one student many years ago, which, as has been my privilege on occasion, he told me of in some detail at varying intervals. It happens that personal experience will sometimes strike home when a general treatment fails.

"It was back in the old days. He had read many books with profit, but then came the first volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me*. That was the turning point for him, he told me, from Letter XII on, through 'To Aspirants for Chêlaship.' He knew then what he wanted, what he *must have:* and here were his practical directions into which *Light on the Path, The Voice of the*

Silence, and the rest, fitted perfectly. He was determined to become a chêla, to find his Master and to be accepted by him. He read and re-read until he almost knew those pages by heart; he studied them, striving to gain their utmost meaning, all that they offered of radiant hope, every possible hint of the best manner in which to proceed.

"One fact stood out boldly: he must do this for himself, in silence and alone. Then he saw that the becoming 'a chêla in reality' meant the acquirement of 'certain spiritual principles', which obviously he completely lacked since he had no least idea where he should apply. 'So much the better', he said at this point, 'there is more to this than appears'; and he kept repeating to himself the words: 'You must then reach a point other than that where you now stand, before you can even ask to be taken as a chêla on probation.' 'Fine', he said to this, 'nothing cheap about it. It takes a man, and will make a man.'

"What 'spiritual principles'? These were not specified. 'No harm', he said, 'in having them all!' So he looked himself over very carefully and searchingly for several days in this light, and concluded at the end that he had rudiments of some spiritual principles, 'physical and astral bodies of them' in his phrasing, but not in the least any 'Manas or Buddhi of them', which he shrewdly suspected was the meaning intended by calling them 'spiritual'. Of others he frankly confessed that he could not find a trace,—the class, therefore, he resolved first to strive after; his reasoning being that he could more readily build a physical or astral thing than create on higher planes. So one by one and little by little, he struggled at set acquirements, his eyes always on his coveted goal, which he loved the more as he dwelt with it and toiled for it. This helped him greatly with the underscored injunction 'to get rid of the strength of the personal idea', which at first was difficult; for after a while he found that living with his goal and increasing his love for it, preoccupied him more and more, and he had less place and less time to consider himself, *save as a limitation of the vision of his goal.* So on these lines he constituted himself a disciple, acting both as guru and aspirant, constantly re-adjusting his angles of approach, modifying his rules, increasing his demands upon the lower side of himself, which he saw as the neophyte, as his efforts opened the path before him.

"At one place he went astray for a while. He looked about for some one to serve. First he thought of Judge,—Judge whom he would much have loved to serve. But a little reflection showed him how dangerous this attempt would be for a long time to come, and that even to try to serve Judge would probably end in Judge's serving him—the reverse of his purpose. Then he considered several of the less important members, making a few indefinite efforts. Finally the light dawned. 'I am a fool', he said: 'the *Letters* tell me; the chêla I must serve is the Theosophical Society'; and he did, in every way he could devise or discover, for the sake of that goal which quivered, bathed in golden light, in his heart.

"One reaction he had was revealing. He told me of his surprise when a fellow student commented on the hardship of working alone and unnoticed,

and that he had replied: 'That seems to me part of the consideration and good manners of the Lodge. I am thankful that I can go off in the woods and practise alone, courteously assured in advance that my antics will remain unnoticed until I have made myself presentable.'

"Did he succeed? is the natural question. There must be a distinct limit to what may be revealed of the depths of any man's life, but this much can be said. Later on he told me that he had come to understand what the Christian Master meant in the phrase, 'I am the Way': for as one went on, the Path extended,—the Goal was farther ahead because so much higher and nobler; what had been one's object became as nothing, something one would not stop to possess, because of the glory now perceived; the radiance flooding the Path was the very life and presence of the Master, it was all he and all his, and being so was Goal in itself, yet with Goal upon Goal beyond.—CAVÉ."

The Recorder's most grateful thanks!

T.

The best rules to form a young man are: to talk little, to hear much, to reflect alone upon what has passed in company; to distrust one's own opinions, and value others that deserve it.—TEMPLE.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

April 18th, 1910.

DEAR ———

You do not write very often, but I can say sincerely that when you do it is well worth while. Indeed so worth while, that, as Editor of the QUARTERLY, I must ask why you hide your light under a bushel, and do not give others the benefit of your ideas. You can write, and anyone in our ranks who can write should write, for writers are few. Therefore, will you not consider this an official appeal from the QUARTERLY to send in whatever is in your head to say which you think would be useful? I prefer leaving the choice of subjects to the writer whenever possible, for his work is likely to be more spontaneous and vital as he delivers his message from his heart instead of grinding out something on order.

It is an interesting time, not only from the general worldly standpoint where much is going on that is new and important, but particularly from our special standpoint, because our present status and work are all brand new. Never before has the Movement lasted through the end of the century; therefore there are no precedents, no experience, no customs, to fall back upon. It is a problem, changing daily, from the standpoint of the Masters themselves, and hence is of intense interest to all of us who try to catch the ideas of the Masters and carry them out in our work. What will they consider it wise to try next? Is this or that effort a success in these new conditions, or have they proved not worth while? Shall we try to move in that direction or in this? work for that special object or for that? Life is, in a sense, a constant question mark, or rather our theosophical work is; and, as that is our life, it makes life full of piquancy, full of surprises. We never know from day to day what change or turn of events may come, and we must all of us stand ready instantly to throw away all our conceptions of what is wise in the work, and travel along an entirely different road.

The partial ability to do this is the great heritage we have from H. P. B. She stirred up our minds so violently, brushed away so many traditions and customs of thought, forced us to absorb ourselves in a philosophy so utterly foreign to the Western mind, that we, most of us, can face a mental revolution calmly that would leave the ordinary person gasping for breath. We threw overboard, under her inspiration, all our inherited preconceptions of life and religion, and took a new system. Now, with this freedom of mind, and lack of prejudice, and capacity for wide judgments and tolerant opinions, we are returning to the more essentially Western way of thinking, and can see into Western ideas and ideals in a way that few Westerners seem able to do. We have acquired an immense perspective: we judge from a great height: and we can respect and understand the other fellow's point of view. When it differs from ours we usually know why, and sympathize instead of blaming.

All these reflections are but following along your train of thought as indicated in your last letter. I hope you will remember something of what you wrote, otherwise I shall be unintelligible. But it all makes life very interesting, very stimulating, almost exciting, and it is a pleasure to see that you appreciate and understand it so well.

I meant to write more, but my available time is up and I send this scrap instead of waiting.

Yours as always,

C. A. Griscom.

November 12th, 1911.

Dear ———

It has been so long since you wrote your letter of April 16th that I wonder whether you remember having done so at all, and not yet receiving a reply. But your letter has been on my desk all these months, and I have been looking forward to a time when I could answer it. There is so much to do and there is so much going on, that time slips by amazingly.

Do you feel the spiritual current which is flowing under the surface of things? It is stronger than it has been for several thousand years, and before very long, not perhaps in our life time, but soon, we are going to have one of the greatest religious revivals which the world has ever seen. In many ways the time is ripe now, but not in all ways, for there are a lot of ideas in the mind of the world which are obstructions, and which first will have to be swept away. Take such an idea as Socialism. So long as people think that it will remedy pain, trouble and sin, we cannot hope that they will fall back on fundamental religious principles for their solution of the problems of life and living. Therefore, before we have the actual coming to the surface of the new religious movement, we shall have to bring Socialism all the way to the surface and let it prove itself a failure. There are other obstructions of the same kind.

So I can picture the Masters working ceaselessly to ripen all these modern Western fads and fancies, until the force in them comes to a head, explodes and exhausts itself. Then will come the time we have been working for and dreaming dreams about for so long. I think we shall all be there to do our quota in the great work. And it is not all going to be religious propaganda, by any means. That would mean, after all, only a partial regeneration of the world. It needs attention on all planes and in all ways; and, unless I am very much mistaken, the plans contemplate a pretty general housecleaning which will go from the top to the bottom of human life. There are a mass of silly ideas about democracy and republics and the fitness of people to govern themselves, which have to be knocked on the head at the same time.

It is going to be a very interesting world to live in when these great forces begin to move outward and to express themselves in human action and human institutions. Let us all pray that we shall be there, and shall be fitted to

play our little parts. Let us do what we can to get ready now for our share of the work. No one can be spared: all will be needed. How to prepare? Well, it has been borne in upon me recently, that we already are, inside, the very highest thing of which we can think. I mean that literally. I do not believe that we can even imagine a state of being, or a kind of virtue or power, which does not already belong to our souls. Just as we are so often told that we cannot know a thing until we are that thing, so I believe that we cannot think or imagine any thing which we are not already. So our way to prepare ourselves for the future work is to do two things. One is to externalize here and now what we already are inside; and the other is to think of the thing we should like to be, and the part we should like to play, and ask the Master to give us that. We shall only be asking him for what we already are, and for what he already wants us to be and to do. Bid high, too! Hitch your chariot to a star. Do not be afraid to ask for too much. The Masters like audacity.

But all this has very little to do with your letter. It is what is in my mind and heart to say, however, so I say it. In your letter you tell me a little bit of some of the trials and troubles and circumstances of your life. You have indeed had a hard time, but instead of sympathizing with you I feel almost inclined to congratulate you, for it is only to those who are worth while that the Masters give that individual training which is designed to bring out the best that is in them; and it is evident to me, both from what you say and from your point of view in saying it, that you have been getting that personal training. But we grow very tired at times, and then it helps us to receive a word of encouragement and cheer from a fellow disciple.

* * * * * * * *

With kindest regards to ———,

I am,
Sincerely,
C. A. Griscom.

October 24th, 1912.

Dear ———

I have left unanswered your letter of June 23rd, but as I do not usually take from three to six months before answering letters, I shall content myself, by way of apology, with the statement that I went to Europe early in July, and only returned a fortnight ago.

I like your letters even if they do come at long intervals; and this one in particular was of interest to me because I was extremely fond of ———, and was the person in New York with whom he corresponded regularly during his recent years of travel. I shall miss him; and yet I think that his best interests were served by his getting a good rest before the next period of manifestation. He had gone about as far as there was any hope of his going in this life.

It is very interesting indeed, and I am sure would be a matter of great gratification to him, that his death should be the means of bringing you, and the other members in your neighbourhood, into touch with the Church. What you write me about your talk with the clergyman who conducted the service pleases me exceedingly, and I hope you will be able to follow up the connection to the benefit of the clergyman, the Church and the Society.

Then what you say of your work in the future and the time left you to do it, interests me, as we all have such ideas—about ourselves first, and then about those with whom we are associated—and these are wrong ideas, fundamentally wrong, because we leave out the Master, and because we are assuming, even if half unconsciously, that it is we who actually do the things in the outer world, and that it is our capacity, intelligence and ability that set the limits to what it is possible to do.

What we forget is that everything we are, and have, and can do, comes from him, and that the amount of this, whether measured by his standard or by that of the world, depends not upon our ability, but upon how much he considers it wise, at that time, to give. We have got to be faithful, obedient and willing servants; but our part is pretty much making ourselves unobstructed channels for his force to work through. Therefore what we accomplish, in a worldly sense, depends, not upon our ability, our intelligence, our opportunities, but upon whether or not the time is ripe for him to have a big outward movement that will make a splurge in the eyes of the world.

Molinos was never heard of until he was middle-aged; until 1675. Yet when he was arrested by the Inquisition seven or eight years later, he is said to have had a million followers. Do you suppose that it was Molinos who did this?

Ignatius Loyola worked fifteen years to get six or seven followers. He tried one thing after another and all of them were complete failures, except in so far as they trained him and his followers. Then when he was middle-aged and, from the human standpoint, almost worn out, the hour struck; and before he died, a very few years later, the Society of Jesus had spread all over the world, and was by far the most important power for good that existed at that time in the world. Do you suppose that Ignatius and his seven followers did this?

My friend, all we have to do is to be ready, when the hour strikes, to serve as channels for the Master's force. It does not matter how ignorant we may be, for he has performed miracles and founded great institutions with people who were not able to read and write. But they were clean, and his power could flow through them.

I do not know whether the hour will strike while you and I are alive; I do not know whether it is the plan of the Lodge to have a big, outward movement in this day and generation, or not. I have thought that it was not; but in recent years I have begun to believe that maybe the plan was changing, and that we are still to see a movement that will be great, even in the outer and worldly sense. After all, it does not matter much; because we know that his power, and the little which we can contribute, will be used, in any event,

for the best interests of the world. The main thing is to be ready, always ready; and we have been given many years of peace and quiet in which to get ready. As is said in the beginning of the second part of *Light on the Path*, we all of us must feel how inadequately prepared we are: so we all have plenty to do.

Please give my best wishes to ———.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom.

September 30th, 1913.

Dear ———

I was very glad to get your letter of the 17th of August, and I am sorry that circumstances have prevented an earlier reply. It interested me greatly as illustrating not only your, but what I feel sure is the point of view of many others. . . . . There has been a great deal of bewilderment and honest doubt as to the future, and as to the course which is being followed at New York. This, of course, is because of our limitations here. We too had to learn, had to feel our way, had to break entirely new ground; and all this took time. . . . .

I think most members fail to realize that never before in the history of the world was there just the situation which followed the successful carrying of the Movement over the century. The Lodge itself was experimenting, and had to feel its way. It wished to push the wedge, forged by H. P. B. and by Judge, as far into this material civilization as was possible, and the Masters had very limited instruments with which to do it, and they had to watch most carefully for all kinds of inevitable reactions, both now and hereafter. What was the line of least resistance? Undoubtedly, in this country, something along Christian lines; and so, as we had sense enough to see it, the work took on a Christian colouring. We deliberately tried to put the accumulated power and light, back of our Theosophical ideals, into the ordinary religious atmosphere of the day. We have been unexpectedly successful, and will be much more so. We make the past work of H. P. B. and Judge fruitful, and we gain able recruits to carry on the ideals. A few, a remarkably few, like ——— in England, and one or two over here, thought they saw in this some kind of departure from, and treachery to, the teachings and work of H. P. B. They left to do what they thought right. Another class, considerably larger, waited in some doubt and perplexity, but with faith, and perhaps some hope, and are now beginning to see light.

You ask if the T. S. really did come close to being wiped out. Yes. It was nip and tuck for a time, and those who carried it through, both inside and out, were so exhausted that for some years there was little doing but marking time and preparing for the future. But that period of resting and preparing ended some years ago, and since then the work has grown more and more

virile and vigorous. It is still not the time for wide-spread outer activity; for many members, for notoriety and public acclaim. Those things bring many perils . . . . ; but the live centre is there, healthy, growing, and getting stronger day by day.

* * * * * * * *

Sincerely,
C. A. Griscom.

P. S. If you get discouraged again, remember that the Master's work in Kali Yuga is warfare,—and we, who seek to serve him, must live perilously near defeat, facing risk of failure, but learning to wrest victory out of defeat. It is not child's play, or a game; it's war.

It is better to be unborn than untaught.—Leighton.

He must be a wise man who knows what is wise.—Xenophon.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

On the morning of Saturday, April 28th, 1928, at 10.30, the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 64 Washington Mews, New York, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston. Temporary organization was effected by the election of Mr. Johnston as Temporary Chairman of the Convention, and Miss Julia Chickering as Temporary Secretary. It was voted that a Committee on Credentials should be appointed by the Chair, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Mr. Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss Isabel E. Perkins, Secretary T. S.; Miss Martha E. Youngs, Assistant Treasurer.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

Mr. Johnston: During the period in which the Committee on Credentials carries out its work, it is the privilege of the Temporary Chairman to try to express to the members present the very sincere welcome of the local Branch, and to try to express for all of us something of the profound happiness and real joy that we have in each one of these Conventions. As the years pass, our treasures multiply and we add Convention to Convention, each one with its measure of spiritual life and, let us hope, of permanent accomplishment. The Convention this year, it has been said, should have the note of stillness, that stillness in which it becomes easier to perceive the spiritual presence of the Masters. Perhaps we should use that stillness also in another way,—to try to look ahead. You will remember the letters in *The Occult World*, where a Master speaks of an avalanche in the Karakorum Mountains, and of taking advantage of the intense stillness that followed it to try to see the spiritual facts of the situation, in detail.

The first thing we should remember is that a period of stillness is the very opposite of a period of relaxation. There must be nothing like resting on our oars, no cessation of the highest kind of effort. On the contrary, we should use such a period to see what dangers lie ahead. The enemy has not been reformed or converted, although the enemy always tries to persuade us that he has been. We have a tragic example of the way to win the war and lose the peace, in the world to-day. We shall be wise to take advantage of that world situation to notice what are the factors which caused the victors to lose the peace, and to guard against those dangers in ourselves.

Perhaps the first is the possibility of jealousy, always subtle and generally working under the skin; then wounded vanity, as there was in some of the nations during the war and after it; then material self-interest of one kind or another—seeking something for oneself; then, perhaps most dangerous of all, sentimentalism masquerading as charity. If we keep these in mind

and are on our guard against them, we shall be in less danger of losing the peace as the victors in the World War are tragically losing the peace which they won.

We must remember that the enemy is not converted, has not turned good; and that the enemy in ourselves is as vigorous as ever. So in this Convention let us see the dangers, and at the same time let us see the splendid opportunities which may be used to our profit if we will guard against these dangers. We have an opportunity such as no people have had for thousands of years. We hardly realize the greatness of it, and what a splendid gift the Masters have given us in that opportunity. As the Convention advances, perhaps that will be brought home to us more and more clearly and with greater promise and greater joy.

The Committee is ready to report.

Report of the Committee on Credentials

Mr. H. B. Mitchell: The Committee has examined the credentials submitted, and finds that the following Branches are represented either by delegates or by proxy, entitled to cast ninety-eight votes, and representing six different countries:

Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
Gateshead, Gateshead, England
Hope, Providence, R. I.
Jehoshua, Sanfernando, Venezuela
Krishna, South Shields, England
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
New York, New York, N. Y.
Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Oslo, Oslo, Norway
Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Virya, Denver, Colorado
Whitley Bay, Whitley Bay, England

After the Report of the Committee on Credentials had, on motion, been accepted, the Temporary Chairman asked that the permanent organization of the Convention be effected. On motion duly made and seconded, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, as President of the New York Branch, was unanimously elected Permanent Chairman, Miss Perkins being elected Permanent Secretary, and Miss Chickering Permanent Assistant Secretary. Mr. Mitchell then took the Chair.

Address of the Permanent Chairman

The Chairman: Once again you have conferred upon me a great honour. Once again I thank you for it, though I realize that with that honour go an opportunity and responsibility which I can only very inadequately fulfil; for the Chairman of these Conventions, if he is to be such in more than name, should focus the thought and feeling, the collective aspiration and will of the Society as a whole, and should reflect them back so as to aid them to come to clearer self-consciousness and expression in the minds of all our members. It is not an easy thing to do; yet it is something that needs doing, and, whether adequately or not, it is something that I must attempt.

I am quite sure that the first feeling we had as we assembled, that which had risen to the surface of our minds and hearts, was gladness and gratitude; gladness that we were here, and a deep-springing, overflowing gratitude for all that we meet here, for our fellows and for all that the Society means. But deeper than that, and stronger than that, is something in which personal feeling and all thought of self are largely lost,—the resolution to be true to the responsibilities that are ours, to fulfil the trust that our predecessors have handed on to us, the trust that the Masters themselves have reposed in us.

I do not think that I shall run any risk of being assumed to have forgotten, or to be violating, the free character of the Society, if I ask permission to say what I have to say from a point of view, both of the Society and of our work, which well may not be shared by some of you here

to-day—which certainly no member of the Society is under any obligation to take or to share. If there be those who are not in agreement with me, I shall beg them to remember that I am only exercising the privilege, which is accorded to all members by our Constitution, of asking a tolerant hearing for views that are honestly held.

If this be understood, I want to take my stand upon the statement, made by the founders of the Society, that it was initiated by the Masters of Wisdom, by that great living Brotherhood of "just men made perfect", the Elder Brothers of our race, who, throughout all the ages, have striven to guard and guide the evolution of mankind, and from whom have come all the world's great religions. The founders of the Society were explicit in their statements that their action in creating it was under directions that had been received from those Elder Brothers of ours, and that therefore, through the pursuit of its stated objects, the Society may fulfil the purposes of Masters, and serve them as an instrument in guiding the evolution of mankind. In the closing chapter of the *Key to Theosophy*, Madame Blavatsky deals with the meaning and the mission of the Society from this point of view, and sets forth what it was hoped that it might accomplish. It is pointed out that from the great Lodge of Masters there comes, in the closing quarter of each century, some new outgiving of force, an outpouring of spirituality, of mysticism, a new impulse to the spiritual progress of humanity. Madame Blavatsky says that, if we care to do so, we can trace these movements back, century by century, through all recorded history; and that our Society is but a part of that great, age-old Theosophical Movement,—a term in the sequence, representing the cyclic outgiving for the closing quarter of the nineteenth century. In the past, no one of these movements has been able to continue, true to its purpose, so as to bridge the gap between one outgiving and the next; but such continuance is *possible*, and whether or no our Society is to achieve it, rests with us. That is our opportunity, and our responsibility: to keep alive in the world, until the new outgiving in 1975, an instrument the Masters formed for aiding the upward progress of the human race. As I have said, no member of the Society is under the least obligation to accept this view of the Society's origin and function; nor under the least obligation to believe in the existence of Masters. Yet many of us do believe, and have reason to believe in them; and it is from this point of view, in the effort to make clear the responsibility that rests upon us if we hold it, that I want to speak to-day of our work.

Let us try to look both backward and forward. Without attempting to describe again what has been so often described, let us think of the conditions in which the Society was founded: the intense dogmatism and sectarianism that marked science and theology alike, and the bitter antagonism between them; and let us ask ourselves what was most needed to meet those conditions; what immediate purpose the Society was intended to serve. Madame Blavatsky's answer to that question is indicated in the same chapter of the *Key* to which we have already referred; but it is indicated no less by all that she did, by the whole early history of the Society. The first need was for greater freedom of thought and of spirit, for a tearing down of barriers, that wider, more inclusive views and sympathies might be gained. We know the method that was adopted,—the simple method of creating and maintaining, by means of The Theosophical Society, a free platform where such wider views of life could be contributed, reflected from the teachings of the Lodge itself, to aid us to broader vision and to higher ideals. It was hoped that if a truer philosophy were set side by side with a false, if it could be given an honest, impartial hearing, the appeal of truth itself would cause its acceptance in the hearts and minds and souls that were ready for it; and that by the working of the leaven of truth, thus introduced into the thought of the world, much might be accomplished. As we look back, and contrast the conditions then with those that exist to-day, we see that much *has been* accomplished, and accomplished by The Theosophical Society.

I must make clear just what I mean by this; for otherwise it may well sound absurd for our little Society, the delegates of which can meet here in as small a hall as this, to claim that it has had such far-reaching and such great effect upon the world. That is our claim; but, to be understood, it must be realized that when we say it has been done through Theosophy and The Theosophical Society, we are not saying that *we* did it. We are saying that the great Lodge of Masters did it,—through the instrument they formed for the purpose.

Think of a great factory whose machinery is controlled by electric power. The power house is not in the factory. It may be hundreds of miles away; beside the coal mines, or at some waterfall, where nature's energies are so transformed as to be serviceable to man. Yet all that controls the machinery in the factory, all that makes possible its great production, is the electric power that is led into it, from the distant power house, along two wires that terminate in a small junction box. From that box other wires, within the factory, lead to the switch-boards, and thence to the separate machines. If the junction box were not there, or if the outside wires from the power house did not reach to it, not a wheel would turn, or, if turning, could be stopped. That junction box is a symbol of the place and function of The Theosophical Society in the spiritual thought of the world. We are very small, very insignificant; yet we serve as a terminal, as a junction box within the world, into which the Lodge force and transforming life, its ideals and will and guidance, can flow, and through which it works its work.

The great thing that differentiates our age from those that are past, is that, because of the continuing existence of The Theosophical Society, there is in the thought of the world to-day, such a terminal of spiritual consciousness,—of conscious recognition of the existence of the Lodge of Masters, of the existence of the spiritual world, of the existence of a goal toward which mankind is moving,—the consciousness of the inner life of discipleship, and the possibility of entering it consciously and fully. At no corresponding time, in the cycles of past centuries, has there been such a terminal of consciousness. Our own movement has been carried further than were any of the past.

Fifty-three years have passed since the Society was founded. We have reached and left behind the half-way mark in the race that we were set to run; and we can, as I said, look back and see stupendous changes in that more than half a century. Many of them are reflected, in the closing pages of the *Key*, and elsewhere in Madame Blavatsky's writings, as the *hopes* which the founders of the Society had for the result of its work, when the *Key* was written, nearly forty years ago. It was hoped that if the Movement could continue, as it so far has continued, true to its original purpose into the present century, the fetters of dogmatism, of misunderstood creeds, of class and racial prejudices—fetters of many different kinds, binding and confining the freedom of thought and of the spirit—might fall away; that science might push its way deeper into the finer forces of nature; that theology might become more free and true. As we look back we see very remarkable progress in directions in which The Theosophical Society has consciously led the way. On all sides, barriers have fallen; limitations have been swept aside; and science is to-day dealing with forces of which it knew nothing fifty years ago.

Let us take one science as an example,—physics. Its fundamental concepts of matter and mass have been wholly changed since the opening of the twentieth century; and matter has been largely dissolved and resolved into energy. The discovery of the Roentgen and X-rays is little more than thirty years old. The discovery of radium and the radio-active substances followed them, pointing the way to the intra-atomic forces, and showing that the atom itself could no longer be regarded as a fixed, indivisible entity, but that it must be considered—more as Theosophy said it should be considered—as a miniature solar system: a central nucleus around which, like planets, electric particles revolved, mirroring in little what the heavens mirror in great. Physics has pushed its way behind matter—or behind what it had thought of as matter—to centres of electric energy, and to forces, finer, subtiler, and far more potent than those it had known before. Its progress has all been in the directions indicated by Theosophy.

Similar changes have taken place in the other sciences. In modern chemistry, ancient alchemy, which a generation ago was held up to scorn as the very quintessence of superstitious ignorance, has now been rehabilitated. It had to be; for with the discovery of radium we saw the transmutation of the elements taking place before our eyes. In astronomy, Newton's laws are being questioned—as approximations, valid only within a limited range. Archæology and anthropology are steadily pushing the age of man back, further and further, toward figures commensurate with those for which Madame Blavatsky contended. Turning from science to theology the changes are no less marked. The religions of the East are approached in a very different spirit to-day than they were fifty years ago; and in the West itself, much of the old

dogmatism—the arrogant, unreasoning assumption that the whole of truth is packed into a sectarian creed—has largely disappeared.

All of this has been very frequently commented upon in the meetings of our Society. We are very conscious of it, and have congratulated ourselves upon it many times. But there is another side to the picture; and this other side, though it has received far less attention, concerns us vitally.

Every one of the great truths to which Theosophy has pointed, every one of the new discoveries of science and the theories built upon them, every increase of freedom that has marked religious thought, is capable of perversion and *has experienced perversion.* One cannot sweep aside barriers and loose fetters without giving the opportunity for evil, as well as good, to arise. And evil has arisen. As the Theosophical Movement is an outpouring from above, so it has been met by a great resurgence from beneath. The ground has been cleared, only to reveal that it is a battleground,—that all that has been gained is capable of being used against us. Truth is a two-edged sword; knowledge and power lead only to destruction in those unfitted to receive them; and freedom, degenerating to licence, loses all that was set free.

To contrast the conditions in the world to-day with those of a generation ago, is to become convinced that we are living in the midst of a revolution which, in its immediate effects upon science and religion, political ideas and social customs, habits of thought and popular philosophy, is as radical as any that the history of a thousand years records. More than this, such a contrast shows, by many and unmistakable signs, that, whatever may be its ultimate outcome, the course of this revolution has so far been largely dominated by forces rising from beneath, not descending from above. Transmutation of the elements, which chemistry had thought to be permanent and fixed, has been proved, as we noted a moment ago, to be not only possible but a present, continuing fact. It is profoundly significant that the first transmutations discovered should be those which degrade,—not changing lead to gold, but debasing gold to lead. It is the same wherever we look, in little or in big. What is our modern music? our "jazz" and syncopated rhythms? They are a resurgence of savage music, of the African drums. Our dancing? It is an imitation, a reflection, of negro dancing. Whence comes our modern fashion of speech? Does it come down to us from the purists, from the scholars, from the cultured? Obviously not. It is a surrender of the literate to the illiterate. Our English language is being flooded by the colloquialisms and idioms of our immigrants. It is a taking over by the educated of the speech of the uneducated—of their jargon and their vulgarisms. And our philosophy—the philosophy of life to-day, the concept of the end to be sought? It is the gratification of self. It is comfort, pleasure; wealth with which to purchase ease, security and self-indulgence. It centres on the body, with little thought of the soul.

Therefore it is that if the Theosophical Movement were to end to-day, if its work were to stop with what has so far been accomplished, if the freedom for which it has laboured were to be thus left as licence, and its great ideals, given to the world, were to be left as the world has taken and used them, more would be lost than has been gained. All that has been gained is still at stake, still at hazard; and more than at stake and at hazard, for if we suffer defeat in the battle that has been evoked, if we fail to push the Movement further toward the goal which has been immediately set us, all that has so far been accomplished, all that has been poured out into the Movement, may react and be used against it—and against the great Lodge who have entrusted it to us.

Let us turn once again to the closing chapter of the *Key to Theosophy,* where H. P. B. tries to make clear the factors that must determine the future of the Society. She points out that Theosophy is not at stake, for it is everlasting Truth and exists eternally. Neither, in one sense, is the Theosophical Movement at stake; for it, too, is eternal, and in the hands of the great Lodge of Masters. But it is made very clear that The Theosophical Society—the fate of the Movement in this century—is at stake; and with it the fruits of the life-work and sacrifice of its founders. This is at stake; and whether success or failure is to ensue "depends, almost entirely, upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last, but not least, upon the knowledge and the wisdom" of those who come after the founders, into whose hands the destiny of the Society will be placed when the founders are dead. We are those in whose hands

that destiny now rests. We are those who are thus trusted. It is upon us, upon our selflessness, earnestness and devotion, and last but by no means least, upon our knowledge and wisdom and ability to understand and meet the need, that success or failure, victory or calamitous defeat, must rest and turn.

We assemble here to-day therefore, as I said in the beginning, so profoundly sensible of the responsibilities that are ours, and of the magnitude of the issues that are involved, that all personal feeling, all thought of self, are lost in the resolution to be true to the trust imposed in us. We approach our work as the soldier advances to battle; glad and grateful that his opportunity has come, but hearing already the sound of the guns and knowing that the supreme test of his manhood is now at hand. So must we advance to the test of our souls,—of our selflessness and devotion, of our wisdom and understanding.

We ask ourselves what is the crucial need. How are we to meet the perversions of the truth, the resurgence from beneath, against which we must contend? We must meet them by their opposites; by truth that is not perverted, by a life and a power that are drawn from above. Let us think again. Why is this battle ours? It is because we have been entrusted with the power to win it. To us has been given that which the world needs. What is it that we have been given? what differentiates our consciousness, our philosophy, our Movement from all else in the world to-day? It is, I think, two things. First, knowledge of the Lodge of Masters as a living Brotherhood, as a living organism and fact in Being. Throughout the whole human race, in each religion, there is belief in *some* Master. They may not give him that name; but whether it be Buddha or Christ or Krishna, whether we look to India or Palestine, Egypt or China or the vanished Aztecs, we find *some* Master is recognized as the source of their religion, as their guide to the realities of the spiritual life. The recognition of *a* Master, and the possibility of divine inspiration, is not, therefore, our special contribution to the world. But the recognition of the Lodge of Masters as the Lodge, the recognition that all the great religions of the world have been drawn from the same source and reflect the same truths, the recognition that all the great spiritual teachers of mankind are brothers and belong to one great Brotherhood, one living organism, the clear recognition of the hierarchical principle as a fact in life, in nature, in the essence of Being itself,—that, I think, is the peculiar prerogative of The Theosophical Society and of students of Theosophy.

Yet, like every truth that Theosophy has brought or fostered, it has been, and is being, perverted to ends the opposite of its own. It has been re-echoed as a lie by innumerable self-deluded psychics or conscious charlatans. Tame and pocket "Adepts", future "Avatars", are led on exhibition round the country; "esoteric teaching" is offered at a price; and the names of Masters, like the name of Theosophy itself, have been dragged through the dust. There is no escaping this. It is part of the condition of the battle. You have to

> ". . . bear to hear the truth you've spoken
> Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools".

But the value of gold is not lessened because some—seeking short cuts to wealth—have purchased worthless mining stocks.

With the recognition of the Lodge as the Lodge, and the consequent clear perception that mankind has been, and ever is being, guided in its evolution by wisdom that descends to it from above—not the haphazard invention of something acting from beneath—with this comes the recognition of the other half of the evolutionary process; the half which science has ignored. We see that the ascent from matter has been concomitant with a descent from spirit. We perceive them to be but the two halves of one whole; and this perception is the second thing which differentiates our thought from the thought of the world about us.

Science has presented clearly the evolutionary ascent of animal life. It has exhibited the long sequences of forms, leading from the single cell through organisms more and more complex and differentiated, more and more responsive to wider ranges of environment, more and more capable of spontaneous action and of conduct determined by inner purpose rather than by outer necessity. It points to the physical organism of man as the highest term yet attained

in any of those ramifying sequences,—highest in the sense that it permits the functioning, through it as a vehicle, of what is assumed to be the broadest and highest type of consciousness. Many other organisms have greater physical strength, many are longer lived, many have keener senses, many seem better adapted to their environment; but no other, known to science, gives evidence of incarnating so high a spirit, of being capable of expressing and sustaining equal spiritual values and purposes. Yet of this descent and progressive incarnation of the spirit, science says nothing.

About six months ago, Sir Arthur Keith, one of the foremost of the English biologists who still adhere to the Darwinian theory in its original form, likened the evolution of man, through the sequence of lower animal forms, to the evolution of the automobile. Let us consider his simile, and think of the development of the automobile, picturing the series of successive models, from the earliest and crudest to the most highly perfected of to-day, as placed in a long row before us. We are puzzled to know just where to begin. What was the earliest and crudest? Behind the automobile, as we call it, was the steam engine, and the bicycle; the carriage drawn by horses, the ox cart, the wheelbarrow, the sled; the pole, one end of which is carried, one dragged along the ground. Man power, animal power, steam, oil, gasoline, electricity, magnetism. How many different sciences and arts had to be developed to make possible the automobile as it is to-day! Physics and chemistry and metallurgy, steel and copper and brass, the making of glass and of cloth, the growing and treatment of rubber. And all have been combined and introduced into that sequence of more and more efficient and smooth running vehicles, in pursuance of a single purpose—the purpose of man to transport himself and his possessions from one place to another.

We look at that sequence of vehicles. Science asks us to see how each form developed out of that which preceded it. In one sense we see that this is so; that the automobile arose from the wheelbarrow. But in another sense it is not so at all. The automobile arose through the development of that one unswerving purpose which runs throughout the whole sequence, which devised the wheelbarrow and every succeeding form, realizing its end only imperfectly in each, but learning from each how to realize it better. The actual evolutionary force has not been something in the vehicle, but in the will of man. The evolution has been the evolution of a purpose, coming to more and more complete fulfilment as it came to clearer self-consciousness of the betterments that were possible, and reached out to *embody them.* The history of the automobile is the history of the progressive incarnation of a purpose; and though that purpose lives and is manifest in the wheelbarrow and the ox cart and the car of to-day, it is no one of these, nor all of them together. It is a thing of the spirit, not of matter.

It is so with the evolution of mankind. Man is not his body. His body is the vehicle he has devised and uses. His history is the history of the progressive incarnation of his spirit, descending from above into the world of matter, striving toward that goal which we have been told is the object of all evolution—the attainment of full and true self-consciousness. He has built himself vesture after vesture, drawing matter up and animating it in higher and higher organisms through which he can express himself more fully, into which he can incarnate more completely. But never is he wholly incarnated. He always transcends himself; and that which is above strives to descend, to draw up that which is below.

The descent of spirit with the ascent of matter; these two need to be seen as a single whole. But the world does not so see them, and science gives no thought to spirit or to the purpose of the evolution that it studies. Because these are ignored by science, popular thought ignores them also, and does more—denies them. Many scientists may also deny them, but science itself does not. It only says it is not competent to deal with them. Science fishes for truth with a net adapted to certain kinds of truth, but which lets other kinds pass through it. It has set itself to trace the sequence of forms, but not to pronounce on the spirit which created them. But because of this, the man in the street has said: There is no spirit, no cause; the sequence is complete without them; life and consciousness are but a ferment in matter and have arisen from beneath. So he sees his most fundamental purposes, his deepest identities, his highest values, as products of the slime. In that view religion becomes to him no more than the survival of primitive superstition and ignorance, and his sophistication rejects all

that gives meaning and value to life, turning back to identify himself with the mere animal in him, which is all that he recognizes as real.

The great need of the world to-day is to realize that the true life of man is not the life of the body, but the life of the spirit; that this spirit descends from above, and that only as he reaches up to what is above, can he lay permanent hold upon it. The theosophical view of evolution, could men's minds be brought to accept its truth, would go far to meet that need. In our hands has been placed the antidote for the poison of the age.

There is no limiting the power of consciousness or the effect of thought. A man's philosophy, his view of truth, the ideals he has set himself, enter into all he does. It is true that all he does reacts upon his philosophy; the action is not all one way. But what a man holds to be true is that which, consciously or unconsciously, he will act out. If his philosophy be false, so will be his actions. The world has been misled by science, even as it has been misled by its own desires. It needs the gift of truth that has been given us; and we must give it.

It has been said that Theosophy is intellectually an attitude, practically a method, ethically a spirit, and religiously a life. It might not be a far-fetched supposition, recognizing as we do that the life is the goal, to think that the hundred years span, which is our special concern, might properly be divided into four quarters, each stressing one of those fourfold divisions of Theosophy. There would be, first, the imparting of intellectual knowledge and the creation of an intellectual attitude. Next would come the development of a practical method for apprehending and assimilating that knowledge; and in the third twenty-five years—the cycle we are now entering—there should be the growth and rule of an ethical spirit. Surely we can see that, if the truth that life comes from above were really apprehended and assimilated, it would yield an ethical result. It would make us live our lives no longer under the dominance of what rises from beneath, no longer with the idea that we are separate beings, to find our highest aims in the gratification of a separate, personal self. Instead, it would make us live our lives as ambassadors of the Most High, as representatives of something infinitely greater than ourselves. Nothing has value save as it represents something greater than itself. The king rules by divine right, if he rule at all, if he be in fact a king. The soldier obeys his captain, represents his captain; and the captain his colonel; and the colonel his general. The commander-in-chief represents the will of the nation. The servant has the dignity of his service, is clothed with the dignity of that which he serves. Everything that is, has dignity and worth only because it represents something higher; and that which is greatest is worthless unless it represents something greater still.

Surely that recognition must bring an ethical spirit, the spirit which the world needs, and which alone can make all that the Society has so far accomplished, all that the Masters have poured out upon it, all the sacrifices of our predecessors, come to a fruition that shall be good and not evil.

We are told that Theosophy was given to the world to become the foundation of the future religions of humanity. A living religion can be founded only on a living spirit. Looking out upon the churches of to-day, we see to what a great extent their old foundations have been swept away. They fell from the living spirit to the dead letter of their creeds and dogmas; and when these crumbled and had to be discarded, it seemed that there was very little left. It was the old story of throwing out the baby with the bath water. But though the new foundations are not yet recognized, we, who believe in Masters, know that they are being laid. More, we know that stones, which must enter into them, have been placed in our own hands. Such a stone is our belief in Masters, the knowledge that we have been given of the existence of the Lodge. Before the races of men were as closely knit together as they are now, before we saw the whole universe as one, and recognized that the chemistry of the stars was not other than the chemistry of our own earth, a religion could be given as the religion of a single tribe, as the teaching of a single Master to his "chosen" people. Drawn though it in fact was from the great Lodge, from the great common store-house of spiritual truth, it could still bear the appearance of being unique; and in the earlier days of greater isolation, that appearance might be an aid, rather than a barrier to its acceptance. But to the modern mind, truth, if it be truth, must be universal; and nothing that seems unique, that stands out in contradiction

to all else we know, can be easily accepted, either in itself or in witness to something beyond itself, until that contradiction is removed. Therefore it is that now and in the future, the most convincing evidence of the truth of any religion cannot be the uniqueness of its founder's life and teaching, but the fact that they typify and manifest something that is universal and eternal, something which, in transcending, nevertheless continues and supplements our own deepest experience. The knowledge of the spiritual hierarchy as inherent in the nature of Being, the knowledge of the Lodge as the Lodge, and the knowledge that all religions are but reflections, however partial or distorted, of the same proven laws of spiritual life and consciousness,—such knowledge must be a part of the broader foundations on which all future religions shall rest.

The Theosophical Society has, then, gifts to give and a mission to fulfil. To us has been given that which the world needs; and the responsibility is ours for that which has been entrusted to us. We cannot force it on the world, against the world's will; nor are we asked to do so. But we are asked to keep it as we have received it, living and potent, against the time when the world shall seek it. We are asked to keep the terminal of living truth alive within our own consciousness, and so within the consciousness of the world, that the Lodge force may continue to enter and work therein. But for truth to *live*, in any consciousness, it must *be lived* there; and it is in this that our responsibility lies, and the test of our fidelity. If we cannot, if we do not, make our own lives an expression of the spirit of Theosophy, if we cannot seek and find our highest good in its service, acting as the agents, however humble, of the great Hierarchy of Spiritual Being,—if we cannot so view and live our own lives, how can we expect that the world will be convinced of truth which we ourselves reject? The battle-ground remains in us, though our mission lies in the world.

It was then requested that the Chairman be empowered to appoint the usual Committees on Nominations, on Resolutions, and on Letters of Greeting. This having been voted, the Report of the Executive Committee was called for, Mr. Johnston as Chairman being asked to speak first.

Report of the Executive Committee

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Chairman, The duty of the Executive Committee is to represent the whole Society and to form the principle of continuity; therefore a part at least of the Executive Committee, and the greater part, is always in being. It overlaps from Convention to Convention and is continuous in life. That function imposes upon the Executive Committee a corresponding responsibility to look back and to look forward, and, so far as lies in its power, to insure the continuity of direction and of movement in the Society, as representative of the Society's life. If we look back and look forward, we shall record, of course, first such activities as have taken place which are referred to the Executive Committee.

Looking back (I am expressing for the moment my own individual view), one thing is very manifest in the last year, and that is a condition of strain. Strain there must be in The Theosophical Society, because, as our Chairman has just reminded us, our function is to lay the foundation stone of the future religions of humanity. That stone must be solid and must be firm. But there is a quality in this strain which has been conspicuous and which is not right, and that is its inequitable distribution.

I remember a story about some people carrying a burden. One said to the other, "This is tremendously heavy, I had no realization how heavy it was!" The other said, "Oh, do you carry? I just lean on." I think that that is something which every one of us could profitably take to heart. During the last six months, have we been carrying or have we been leaning on? If the latter, then we know at any rate, that there has been inequitable strain. I did not say uneven, because necessarily the more experienced must bear more strain than the less experienced,—but inequitable.

Let us see what can be done about it. First, diligently to try and examine ourselves: have we carried or have we leaned on? What are we going to do about it in the future? There are

certain specific and concrete ways in which we may begin to amend: first, understanding of our teaching—how many of us really understand the teaching of the Theosophical Movement? How many of us go back, again and again, to our fundamental books, and, when we have spare time, take up, not a magazine, but *The Secret Doctrine*, or *Light on the Path*, or *Letters That Have Helped Me*, or the *Key to Theosophy?* How many find a privilege and joy in strengthening and renewing our knowledge of theosophical teaching? That is one way to carry. How many of us know our history as a Society? At the beginning of the QUARTERLY there is a little slip of yellow paper which contains very telling statements as regards our relation to certain things. How many members really know the principles involved? How many members really know the history of events? They are all recorded, all published, all in print. If we do not know the history of our Society, how can we really represent it, really understand it? That is a second direction in which we can learn to carry rather than to lean on.

More practically: there are all kinds of small things that have to be done. Everybody realizes that these chairs, by long discipline, arrange themselves for meetings. They walk out like so many penguins and take their places! Nobody has to move them about or arrange that they be there. It all happens spontaneously! There are a great many other things which, so far as the leaning-on members are concerned, happen spontaneously. It is a nice Society—everything happens of itself—we never have to do anything—just sit and have a good time and get something all the time!

That is what is wrong, and it has to be put right. Let us suppose that a member says, I really do not know how to put chairs in line, I do not know how many ought to be in line. How about counting to see? There may be a next time. Supposing the committee were to go off to the Antarctic regions with Commander Byrd. Would you know how to put the chairs in place? How about some more complex matter than the order of the chairs? You say: It is difficult, complex, something ought to be done. Very well, what are you going to do? Are you fit to take hold of that situation and put it straight? Have you the knowledge, the wisdom? You say: Well, I see what the trouble is, but I do not see what will straighten it out. Very well, have you meditated? You know how to meditate. Have you practised meditation? Meditation consists in bringing facts into order and then getting spiritual light on them, so that you will know real values. You should, if you meditate, know how to act. Take counsel—something that we should habitually do; do not "go off" prematurely, merely because you see something that might be done. Ask people who know: Is this the way to do it?—and then set about it. But for heaven's sake, get out of the habit of leaning on instead of carrying! That is what makes the inequitable strain. The real way to heighten the potential, to increase the voltage, the whole pressure of force, is to live the theosophical life intensely, from the moment you wake in the morning until you go to sleep at night, and then until the morning again. If there were that, there would be a positive field of force instead of a rather heavy sense of burden.

So here is something that I put forward personally—I am not speaking officially for the whole Executive Committee; perhaps other members will modify what I have had to say—but here is something that concerns us personally. Something must be done about it. What is each one of us going to do? You have heard these things before. What did you do about it then? Did you say,—the flowers are nice, the chairs are nice, and I won't do anything about it? That will not do. If we are to carry the splendid banner forward through the next fifty years, it has to be done in a more vigorous way than that. There has to be more force, more will, more energy. H. P. B. and Judge did not lean on. If we are to complete their work, we must also carry, not lean on.

This, therefore, is my suggestion, something that I hope you will keep in heart. The responsibility is real, when you recognize it. One takes the risk of pressing it on you, because it has to be recognized and has to be acted on.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before the Chair asks whether other members of the Executive Committee will add to the Report, it may be well to announce the personnel of the standing committees appointed:

Committee on Nominations
Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell, *Chairman*
Miss Mary Kent Wallace
Mr. George M. W. Kobbé

Committee on Resolutions
Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*
Miss Anne Evans
Dr. R. E. Torrey

Committee on Letters of Greeting
Dr. Archibald Keightley, *Chairman*
Dr. C. C. Clark
Mrs. John W. Regan

It was then asked if other members of the Executive Committee would add to the report already made by its Chairman.

MR. HARGROVE: I am exceedingly glad that the Chairman of the Executive Committee said what he did say. Perhaps the same idea could also be expressed in this way: one man says, I am a member of The Theosophical Society; another says, I *belong* to The Theosophical Society. In the Army, if I am not mistaken, no one would say, I am a member of such or such a regiment, but always, I *belong* to such a regiment. Now if we belong, we *belong*,—which means that we feel as one of a family feels,—that we are responsible, and that everything that concerns the regiment, concerns us. It has been well said in this connection that the soldier learns that by putting the interests of his regiment ever before his own interests—in that sense, by identifying himself with a greater self—he obtains a greater freedom, not a less. By shedding his littleness, he acquires bigness.

There are those among you who are in the habit of referring to some of us as the "Ancients," and it is customary for the more talkative of these "Ancients" to address you at the Convention. We must do so with mixed feelings, I think; with a feeling of intense pleasure and of joy, a feeling of great responsibility and privilege, but also with a feeling—increasing as the years pass—almost of desperation,—desperate with desire to give whatever we have to give, to pass on to those who have not been quite so long in the Movement, whatever of experience we may have garnered; desperate to say the right thing, to say the thing that will help the Movement itself, and yet realizing that year after year and year after year, we have done our best, and then asking ourselves sometimes with what result.

You would not be so unkind as to suppose that this implies any feeling of superiority on the part of these so-called Ancients. I assure you that that is not the feeling. But there is a great longing, and even a remnant of hope, that some of you may make better use of our experience than we, alas, have been able to make of it.

It was my duty, a few days ago, to look over a number of old papers and records of the Society, and I realized then, as perhaps I had never realized before, the extraordinary progress that the Movement has made in some vital ways. It has been raised many planes since its inauguration in 1875. I said "the Movement", but I mean the attitude of members of the Society, the receptivity of members of the Society. They have come to appreciate Theosophy in its spiritual significance as they did not do years ago. Its spiritual significance was clearly taught from the very beginning, but no one understood it, or hardly anyone. While comparisons are odious, I cannot resist repeating what was in my own mind when I thought of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY and compared that magazine with what I occasionally see of other magazines quite falsely supposed to be representative of Theosophy. If any proof were needed as to which is the representative of Masters, a glance at those magazines would supply the proof. Take one instance,—the realization by our members that if they would know and serve the Masters, they must know themselves. "Man know thyself" from the very beginning of time has been the teaching of Masters; "Man know thyself" in thy nether regions and in thy higher regions. If you look at a QUARTERLY, you will find pages of instruction under these two heads,—"Letters to Students", "Letters to Friends", "Fragments", and so on. Then look in those other magazines for the same light, and if you can find it you are welcome to it!

Of course, going back to those old records of the Society, remembering again the old troubles

and fights and wounds, and thinking of H. P. B. and her "phenomena", made me wonder whether all of you understand why those phenomena happened. There is always a tendency on the part of students rather to regret that H. P. B. produced teacups out of pillows. Their acquaintances perhaps pass slighting remarks about teacups and pillows. You know, of course, one explanation of these phenomena: that it was necessary that phenomena, which were being produced at séances and attributed to discarnate entities, should be produced in broad daylight, avowedly through the use of the human will. It was necessary to upset the theories of spiritualism; but that is only part of the explanation.

Imagine the period about 1875—or perhaps 1860. The time was coming when a Lodge Messenger would be sent into the world. Let us imagine that there was a conference among the great Adepts as to what should be done, who should go, how the expedition should be conducted. In all history, it had been necessary to get the attention of mankind. Even Christ had been obliged to perform miracles, so as to get the attention of people; and he healed the sick and raised the dead, not merely as a demonstration of his power, but as a demonstration of spiritual law. Let us suppose that some Adept at the conference which I am imagining, suggested: "Well, how about healing the sick and raising the dead?" If I had been there (excuse me!) I should have said: "No earthly use! if you raise the dead they will say that the man was merely suffering from indigestion, and loss of consciousness, and happened to come awake at the right time; heal cancer, and they will say it was not true cancer. Think of something else!" Then they may have gone through a long list of possible performances. Then imagine a very wise Adept saying: "None of those things will do; you must please them, interest them; first of all ask yourselves the level on which they live, the strata of consciousness which they represent. They are children. The solution is obvious: give them toys. Take a teacup out of a pillow, and you have 'got' those people!" In other words, you have, in the character of H. P. B.'s phenomena, an illuminating picture of what the Lodge thought of the world in which their Messenger was going to work.

What happened? Take Sinnett. He was greatly above the average of intelligence, of education, and even of intuition. Yet he sat spellbound, watching H. P. B. produce teacups out of pillows. He could have watched her all day long, and would not have asked anything else under heaven except more teacups, and different kinds of teacups, and different kinds of pillows. Then he would have weighed the teacup before and after. That is what they wanted, and that is what the Lodge gave them, because the Lodge had to catch their attention,—knowing well that there would be a few, a very few, who, in later years, would discover the real Theosophy, both because of Sinnett and in spite of him.

It is all very well to think of it humorously; but stop to think of the sacrifice that was made! Suppose some of the so-called Ancients were told that it was necessary to preach Theosophy to the Bowery; suppose they were told that in order to get the attention of the people over there, they would have to dress up as Harlequin and Columbine. They would do it, but would they like it? Can you imagine anything more humiliating, more revolting, a greater sacrifice? Some might say,—what dreadful people they must be to dress up as Harlequin and Columbine! Well, do not judge them by their sacrifice, imposed upon them by the hideous vulgarity of human nature. Do not judge the Lodge or H. P. B. by the nature of her phenomena, because it is we or our forebears who created the need for just that kind of "miracle"; and if anybody ever dares to talk to you again about teacups, kindly remember what I have said, and round on them.

The Jews certainly had their limitations; but compare the level on which miracles, so-called, were performed, and you do get a true picture of the modern world in comparison with the world as it was in the time of Christ in Palestine, because then, those people with all their faults were vitally interested in spiritual problems. Immortality and similar questions were matters of intense moment. To-day, what is the belief in immortality in comparison with, let us say, the arrival of some people in an aeroplane?

On these occasions of the Theosophical Convention, none of us ever knows, of course, whether for him it will be the last; and always one has the feeling that one must at least try to say what is in one's heart. So one goes back to the past, and thinks, as I have said, of the

very early days, of the phenomena, and so forth, as a preliminary to restating the purpose of it all. I found in a very old issue of *The Theosophist* (1885), in an article on spiritual progress, the statement that the only mission of the Society is to rekindle the torch of Truth, so long extinguished for all but the very few, and to keep that Truth alive by the formation of a fraternal union, the only soil in which the good seed can grow.—As soon as the Society was founded, a great call went out to mankind, and goes out to-day to all who will listen: "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope!" How many heard that call? How many responded, and how many respond to-day? There is no need to remain prisoners of hope. You can burst the gates open if you will, because the Masters have burst them open for us, and nothing remains but the illusion that those gates are closed. There is no one here for whom those gates have not been opened, and I repeat that there is nothing but the illusion that they are closed that keeps you from passing through. And yet that truth has been announced at Convention after Convention, since Conventions were held. How many have believed it? How many have risen in their own souls and said: If that be so, I pass through.

There is a saying in one of the old books: When even the body is an illusion, how can we speak of necessity—the Vedas speak of necessity only for the guidance of the ignorant. Part of our trouble is that we are hypnotized by the idea of necessity,—a misunderstanding of Karma. We believe that we are bound and held by the chain of our sins, or the chain of our limitations, and therefore that this, that or the other thing is an insuperable barrier for us. Yet even the body is an illusion; and the truth of the matter is that all things are an illusion except Masters and chêlaship. Therefore, if you seek reality, it is only with those two things that you *can* deal. H. P. B. said it; Judge said it; everybody has said it. Yet what do we do? Limp along, and limp along, and groan about our burdens, and "lean on", as Mr. Johnston said; and what *they* are crying out for us to do is to rise from the illusion of our barriers—or, if you choose, quietly, serenely to accept them as an illusion, which is all you need to do; then in the flash of an eye, seeing that truth, to act on it.

I am greatly tempted to refer, no matter how briefly, before closing, to a subject that has already been touched upon—and that is the subject of science. There is considerable danger that we shall be hypnotized in part by science and all this talk about science. I think Professor Mitchell was exceedingly charitable to science. What I mean is that we could, for instance, discuss the Roman Catholic Church as represented chiefly by its saints, who, though not perfect, certainly interpreted their religion as well as it can be interpreted. If we think of science, and choose to think of the very best representatives of science, we of course know that they recognize the limitations of science, and that they say, one and all: "We do not pretend to know anything about the soul and similar things—that is not our province—we confine ourselves to the facts that we observe, and we leave it to others to deal with whatever else there may be in the universe." If, however, you wish to obtain a true picture of the Roman Catholic Church, you must take into account not only saints, but others who are quite ordinary people; and you must consider their superstitions. In the same way, when it comes to science, you must think about those who have *their* superstitions. What are the facts? If you take the universities and colleges in the United States at the present time, most of those who are supposed to teach science are rank materialists in every sense of the word—avowedly so—and are destructive of the morality and spiritual life of American youth. I am sure that Professor Mitchell will agree with me in this. He happened to be speaking of the good side of science,—and, as a general rule, it is the duty of students of Theosophy to seek the best in other people's views. Yet,—not always. It is true, for example, that, in one sense, science has made amazing progress. It speaks no longer of "matter"; it speaks instead of "energy". Is that really such amazing progress? Oh, it is a step; but so long as consciousness, as aspiration, as love are looked upon as the products either of matter or of energy, I confess it does not seem to me to matter in the slightest degree whether scientists label the source as energy or matter. They have changed their terms to that extent, but their philosophy is exactly the same.

Then let me ask you this: what good has all this progress done to them or to anybody else, in terms of human happiness, of human well being? I am not including spiritual happiness,

but am limiting my question strictly. Has the telephone made anybody any happier? Edison said it was the greatest contribution to human happiness ever made. Occasionally it is a convenience, but I think you will agree with me that ninety-nine times out of a hundred, it drives you wild. It has not added anything whatsoever to your *happiness*. Has it made you any happier to be able to travel in an automobile at the rate of forty miles an hour? It has probably torn your nerves to shreds. I used to cling to modern plumbing as a contribution to human happiness; but even that has gone, because it has recently been discovered that in India, ten or twenty thousand years ago, they had the most elaborate system of plumbing—so that is not a contribution of modern science. There was merely a certain forgetfulness of such things during the Middle Ages, because at that time they were interested in art and poetry and the like, and needlessly lost their interest in plumbing.

What has science done for us? I am not grateful to modern science or to any scientist. Take the one direction in which they might have done something for us—when we have a pain. All that they can do at the present time if we have a pain, is to cut out something, and give us a worse pain. The very fact that they operate as they do, is a confession of failure on the part of medicine. If someone has so bad a pain that he finally goes to the hospital, one doctor comes in, then another and another; and they say, We do not know the cause of the pain—operate and find out—cut him open and you may find something wrong. The science of healing has almost disappeared; the science of surgery, for obvious reasons, has tremendously advanced.

As for the explanation of things,—for the reason that the only philosophy they possess is a materialistic philosophy, they can explain nothing at all. Take, for example, a little plant, the yellow jasmine. A large dose is known to produce motor paralysis. Orthodox, scientific medicine will tell you that doses of ten to fifteen minims will do something in the way of reducing vitality, counteracting inflammation; but they do not use it any more, because there are other and better remedies. The eclectic school will tell you that one-drop doses will reduce inflammation—it is not necessary to give ten or fifteen minims. Then the homeopath comes along and with equal truth says that one ten-thousandth of a drop or so, instead of depressing, will act as a stimulant, and may be used effectively for curing the conditions which the larger dose produces. But ask for an explanation of the facts—the why, the how! None of them knows. The orthodox practitioner will deny that the homeopath can possibly get results from infinitesimal doses. The facts do not fit into his system; therefore he denies them. The homeopath, on the other hand, is probably just as narrow in his way, and in any case the cause of things does not interest him.

It would be wise, therefore, to follow the example of H. P. B., and to recognize always the marked limitations of science and of scientists,—their danger too. One of them, Dr. Snook, remarked a few days ago that between the Davisson discovery that supposed particles were waves, and the Compton discovery that supposed waves were particles, the whole subject of the atom and its construction is thrown wide open again. Now that is helpful, because what we hope from modern science is that it shall stay wide open, seeing that then there will be some limit to its dogmatism.

I do not want to leave things just there. I want to go back for a moment to the subject that concerns us so much more deeply and vitally than this very ephemeral affair called modern science. I want to go back to the matter of working for The Theosophical Society, of membership in The Theosophical Society, of carrying out the purposes of The Theosophical Society, of taking advantage of our opportunities. Of course there are obstacles. One is a sort of false modesty,—a lack of faith in oneself, which, however, sometimes is merely an excuse for laziness. Another is staleness. People become stale, as the result, not of long membership, but of a misused membership. Nobody becomes stale if he keeps alive. People get into a rut and trudge along and go to meetings and go home and sleep. If they get up to go to another meeting, they perhaps think they are doing something marvellous. Staleness excuses itself, saying, "Oh well, I am getting old, getting stiff, and I have not the hope that I used to have when I was young. I used to think that chêlaship was within reach, but I can see now, that,—well, maybe in some other life." The illusion that in some other life it will be

easier, is a very serious illusion, for this reason: suppose you desire to become a musician in this life, but decide, No, I have not the time—some other life. The truth is that until you sacrifice some part of every day in the agony of five finger exercises, you will never be a musician in this or any other life. You must sacrifice to-day, for the thing you want to-morrow, or you will not get it to-morrow. Therefore, there is only one way open for anybody, and that is to begin,—to begin now, to begin here as if it meant something.

There is even a deeper truth involved: children depend upon hope, and children only. Hope is needed by those who are still suffering from the dream of time, but when you touch the fringes of an immortal consciousness, the need for hope disappears. There is something else, too: no man who calls himself a soldier, so far as I have ever read of soldiers, would say that it is necessary to have hope in order to fight; because it is only when hope has fled that the real fight begins. This does not mean that to go on fighting because you are afraid to stop, is going to win the fight. It means that determination is stronger than hope; it means that the man who really fights gives all of himself in his last blow,—and whether there be much to give or little, has nothing to do with it. He *must* give all of himself, because he can do no less, seeing that he gives the whole content of his heart. And that is what is needed in The Theosophical Society,—unless we would just live to ourselves and for ourselves, and remain everlastingly wrapped up in self; the small and contemptible concerns of self—first one thing and then another thing, with a total inability to lose oneself in the concerns of the regiment, in the honour of the regiment. Why should it be unreasonable to ask of students of Theosophy that which is expected every day from men who merely serve their country in its armed forces? They give that sort of self-forgetfulness without question. They do not imagine that they are making a sacrifice. They may when they are very young, and have not yet really done it; but when they have done it, they know better. They know then that they have gained. They know that they are bigger; that they are worth more as men. As I say, it is done every day without thought; and now,—for us.

It was moved, seconded and carried that the Report of the Executive Committee be accepted with the thanks of the Convention. The Report of the Secretary T. S. was then called for.

Report of the Secretary T. S. for the Year Ending April 27th, 1928.

Whenever we return to a home we love, there is one question we can hardly wait to ask,—Is everything all right? So let me say first, that everything *is* well with the Society and its Branches. Losses have come: tried and true members have fulfilled their time and passed on; accessions have come: new members have entered, little dreaming of the marvellous opportunity offered by the T. S. Militant always, the form of the Society's attack has changed since the days of H. P. B. and her ready sledge-hammer; since the days of Mr. Judge, when every principle it promulgated had to be defended under rapid fire. The new cycle presents a more interior problem,—how each of us shall work Theosophy into his bones and sinews, until it becomes inseparable from him, the centre of his life; until he defends it, instinctively, by seeking to represent its spirit and attitude in every situation and position which daily life brings to him. We have cause for gratitude in the fact that an increasing number of our members strive to incarnate the essential principles of Theosophy, quite unaffected by the noisy proclamation of its psychic counterfeits. The new era: H. P. B. was preparing for it, even when seed was being scattered broadcast and the Society was being inundated with new members. It was "To the Few" that she dedicated her *Voice of the Silence*, knowing that if the harvest were to be garnered and carried over into the future, it would be done by a small, closely-knit band.

Branch Activities

The most significant feature of the Branch reports, is the emphasis placed upon formative work. The action of the Branches seems analogous to that which our Convention Chairman

proposed to us as individuals, in the April QUARTERLY, where he sets forth how the student may so dominate and re-shape his personality as to render it a pliant instrument for the use of his own soul. It is an effort at this sort of indrawal and re-direction that seems to have been operative in our Branches,—by their own action, be it said, and not because of any incitement from Headquarters.

The open door and platform of The Theosophical Society have still been maintained in the world, but the meaning of this cycle has been taken to heart, and classes or meetings for members only, are being given fresh prominence. The ideal set up seems to be,—each Branch a skilled instrument for use by the Movement; and it is recognized that this can be accomplished only as individual members dedicate their lives and efforts to that common end.

Our Branches in Europe and South America report the same tendency,—a fact all the more remarkable because they are so surrounded by those who offer to the public, under the name of Theosophy, a conglomerate of alleged facts and psychic marvels with which only a keen sense of humour can deal adequately. The New York Branch Reports are mentioned, in most generous terms, by all the Branches abroad; they express great indebtedness for the insight gained from them, and for this regularly renewed touch with the thought and aspiration of their comrades.

Two Branches have lost members who were influential in their founding and maintenance. Mrs. Margaret T. Gordon kept her connection with the Middletown Branch even after New York became her home, and her spirited Convention reports on its behalf will be recalled by many here—she was greatly beloved. The Branch in Altagracia de Orituco lost its mainstay when Mauricio de la Cueva died; as long as that staunch old fighter lived, the organization was maintained, even though all its other members had moved away. It has never been customary to present to the Convention a list of deceased members; and manifestly it would not be possible to make mention of each in the QUARTERLY. Their work and the influence of their lives is their best memorial here; while, in the records of the Lodge, each has, undoubtedly, the lasting place he has won.

THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

It was with a quizzical smile that Mr. Griscom sometimes expressed doubt whether many of our members read the magazine from cover to cover; perhaps he was contrasting some of us with beginners in the East who are said to have made great strides, with far less help in years than may be found in any single number of the QUARTERLY. Fortunately, this doubt did not lead him to relax his effort to make it of the greatest possible service to those who seek the spiritual life, and the same desire still animates his fellows who, lavishly expending time and effort, maintain it for love of the same Cause which he delighted to serve, and as the best of memorials to him. To commemorate the completion of its 25th volume, it is hoped to issue a complete Index that will be of use to those who wish to study its material, topically.

Those 100 numbers contain a rich store of wisdom, supplying, as far as written words ever can, counsel, inspiration, and such records of first-hand experience as have, from time immemorial, furnished the tinder-box for the kindling of hearts ready to take fire. To be sure, its circulation is limited, but obviously that is no obstacle, for has not a single copy of some old manuscript served to set half the world on fire with longing and hope? Recently there has been an increase in the number of copies printed, because of the distribution to libraries and to individuals not members of the Society,—and this was made possible by generous contributions to the Propaganda Fund. It might be noted, in passing, that this year we have received an unusual number of inquiries about the T. S. from those whose attention was attracted to it by finding our magazine in their Public Library. Sometimes they start correspondence by asking how to become members; we are always glad to have that question asked, and we always recommend deliberation. It was a member of the Executive Committee who advised, Tell them, in terms suited to the case, that the first step, a vital one, is to get to know the Society, its objects, spirit, and methods: no need to do anything about membership in it until they simply cannot be happy outside its ranks.

The Book Department

The Book Department has been busy, as usual, with the sale of "Standard Books", both to members and to inquirers; even the Public Libraries are beginning to ask for our books. Not only standard books on Theosophy, but all those reviewed in the Quarterly, the Department is glad to send, postpaid, at the published price. Orders are not accepted for books on Theosophy that are misleading, nor does the Department sanction the sale of its publications by organizations merely calling themselves theosophical, mystical, or occult. In consequence, our books are sometimes reported as no longer on sale, but the fact is that any individual purchaser, whatever his connections, can readily secure them from us.

Acknowledgments

All of us recognize that we owe much to those who write for the Quarterly, and even more to those who edit it. Acting as spokesman for the whole Society, I should like to thank them; also the members who do the proof-reading, sometimes at breakneck speed. The Secretary's office has a little work to do in so many different directions, that the need for extra help may arise suddenly; and there are various New York members always ready, with steam up, to respond to requests for volunteers to wrap books, mail copies of the Quarterly, or to attach postage stamps. The Assistant Treasurer does a nice piece of work, every quarter, in arranging the magazine envelopes to suit the post office; and the Assistant Secretary, who would like to edit out any mention of her helpfulness, is ready for whatever comes. It is she who takes notes of all the New York Branch meetings; another member makes an abstract from them, and still another manifolds the number of copies needed for the foreign Branches,—all working with delight that others thus may share the addresses they have enjoyed. The member who has been so very generous in past years, has again paid the salary of a stenographer, an outsider, and the only paid worker. Yet, in another sense, your Secretary is paid, in fact shockingly over-paid, as every least effort is rewarded in so many ways. You, yourselves, are constantly writing and voting thanks, for work which it is both an honour and a pleasure to be permitted to do. Then there is great reward—pleasure plus training—in the opportunity to take your questions, and the problems that arise, to the older members of the Society whose judgment and experience are imparted in a way that is in itself a delight. It is because of their wise guidance that difficulties are foreseen and avoided, and that adjustments are made which give us the privilege of contributing—without jar or friction to mar the sincerity of our offering—whatever we may, to the Masters whose will sustains the Movement and blesses all who even try to serve it.

Respectfully submitted,

Isabel E. Perkins,
Secretary, T. S.

The Chairman: I think it would be very hard to find any single motion which would be welcomed more enthusiastically by all the members of the Society than the motion that the Secretary's Report be accepted with the very grateful thanks of all the members of the Society and its officers.

Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell: The Chairman has taken an unfair advantage of his being Chairman, because that motion was very much on the hearts of many members.

After being duly seconded, the motion was passed unanimously, and the Report of the Treasurer T. S. was called for, Mr. Johnston taking the Chair.

Report of the Treasurer, T. S.

Mr. H. B. Mitchell: The report of the Treasurer should always begin with the acknowledgment that it is Miss Youngs who carries whatever burden may be attached to the Treasurer's office. She draws the receipts, keeps the books, attends to the banking, and sees to it that all goes straight. It is to her that we are indebted for the preparation of the figures which make the report I am about to present to you.

Comparing the record with that of last year, as I find it interesting to do, our receipts and disbursements total almost the same for each year, and the individual items, on both sides of the account, are also surprisingly close. There is an increase of somewhat over $200 in the cost of printing and mailing the QUARTERLY, and that is explained by the increase in the number of copies printed, to which we have just heard reference in the Secretary's report. We started the year with a bank balance of $529 (in round numbers) and we close the year with $431; but $76 of this latter amount represents dues prepaid for the year 1929, and the Treasurer has very recently received some $300 more, not yet put on deposit at our bank, which is also on account of dues for the next year, beginning May 1st. Taking the present year alone, we have managed to spend almost $200 more than the year's receipts.

A sincere pleasure that the Treasurer enjoys, is the opportunity to see the letters from our members which accompany the payment of their dues—speaking of the help they have received from the QUARTERLY and from the Secretary's office, and of the effort they are making to further the cause of Theosophy. These letters are a help and an inspiration.

Our Balance Sheet reads as follows:

MAY 1, 1927–APRIL 28, 1928

Receipts		*Disbursements*	
Current Dues	$ 705.98	Printing and mailing the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY (4 numbers)	$3195.50
General Contributions, and Donations to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	592.05	Stationery and supplies	135.53
Propaganda Fund	1679.40	Postage	74.60
Subscriptions to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	461.39	Rent	150.00
		Telephone	57.80
	$3438.82	Total Disbursements	$3613.43
1929 Dues, prepaid	76.00	Balance April 28, 1928	431.08
Total Receipts	$3514.82		
Balance April 30, 1927	529.69		
	$4044.51		$4044.51

Assets		*Liabilities*	
		1929 Dues, prepaid	$ 76.00
On deposit Corn Exchange Bank, April 28, 1928	$ 431.08	Excess of assets over liabilities	355.08
			$ 431.08

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL,
Treasurer, The Theosophical Society.

MR. JOHNSTON: Before asking what action it is your pleasure to take upon the report of the Treasurer, let me say that I listened with some anxiety for the final figures, as unless we had our usual deficit it would not be satisfactory. It is reassuring to find that we have $100 less in the bank than we had at the beginning of the year!

MR. H. B. MITCHELL: There is no deficit in fact, since all our bills are paid and we have a balance in the bank, although smaller than last year's. The Treasurer is not appealing for special contributions, nor asking that any unusual fund be created, but he would remind members, in the terms used recently by Mr. Johnston, that chairs (and funds) do not arrange themselves.

The report of the Treasurer was accepted with thanks, after a motion duly made and seconded. Mr. H. B. Mitchell then resumed the Chair, and asked for the report of the Committee on Nominations.

Report of the Committee on Nominations

Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell: The Committee begs to nominate, for two vacancies on the Executive Committee—which, as you know, in addition to the Treasurer, elected annually, consists of six members, elected for a term of three years, the term of two expiring each year, the other four remaining in office—the Committee begs to nominate, to succeed Dr. Keightley and Mr. Perkins,—Dr. Keightley and Mr. Perkins; for Secretary, Miss Perkins; Miss Chickering for Assistant Secretary; for Treasurer, Professor Mitchell, and for Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs.

On motion, it was voted that the report of the Committee be adopted and that the Secretary be instructed to cast one ballot for the nominees. This was done, and the nominees were declared elected. After certain announcements had been made, the Convention was, on motion, adjourned until 2.30 p.m.

Afternoon Session

The Convention reconvened at the appointed time, and the Chairman called upon the Committee on Letters of Greeting, to report.

Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting

Dr. Keightley: The Committee has a large number of letters from all parts of the world, from Norway, from Czecho-Slovakia, from Sweden, from various Branches in South America, from the English Branches, and from groups of students in Berlin. First, I will read a cablegram which Mrs. Griscom has just handed to me, sent to her by members of the Norfolk Branch, "Our heartfelt good wishes for Convention. May it be blessed! [signed] Alice Graves, Espoir and Hope Bagnell." We had the very great pleasure of seeing Mrs. and Miss Bagnell here last year. [After reading from the letters, which are printed in full at the end of this Report, Dr. Keightley asked the Chairman to read a letter sent to him as Treasurer, by the Treasurer of the Aussig Branch, which he did.]

The Chairman: Such a letter as this helps us to realize how casually, and as a matter of course, we sometimes regard our being here for Convention, especially those of us who live in New York. It is good for us to get a glimpse of how our distant members, working alone, look forward to the possibility that some one of their number may come,—the contributions of his fellows making it possible for him to do so. The Report of the Committee has brought a great many important considerations before us, and we shall look forward to the opportunity to read these letters in the Quarterly, when we may ponder over their significance.

It was moved and seconded that the Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting be accepted with thanks and that the Committee be discharged. This having been voted, the Chairman called for the Report of the Committee on Resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Resolutions

Mr. Hargrove: Mr. Chairman, I know that the members who are present will miss Miss Hohnstedt, and will be glad to know that she is well, although prevented from attending the Convention owing to the illness of a near relative.

Listening to these reports and letters from so many members who live far away from us, and who in some cases are isolated, brought back to my mind the saying of F. W. Robertson, "What a man can do in conjunction with others does not test the man. Tell us what he can do alone." I venture to suggest that as a test which we might well apply to ourselves.

One advantage of speaking on behalf of the Committee on Resolutions, which reports in the afternoon, as well as speaking as a member of the Executive Committee in the morning, is that the afternoon gives one the opportunity to amend, and if necessary correct, statements

one has made in the morning! I find myself greatly dissatisfied with what I said about medicine, because I spoke of pain as one direction in which science might be of some use, but is not, —to realize, as soon as I had sat down, that anyone who knows anything at all about modern medicine would at once have thought of morphine—that "marvellous modern discovery". Actually, however, my point was that modern science knows next to nothing about *the causes* of pain. Because it is materialistic, it can only trace the genesis of disease from without within, from below up, and it does not realize that the cause of many if not most diseases is in the mind, and filters down through the psychic body and the astral body and the nerves, into the physical.

No one here would make the mistake of supposing that that implies a mental science attitude or a Christian Science attitude toward disease, because physical facts are physical facts. Some of us would say that symptoms of a disease are nearly always evidence of an effort on the part of nature to throw off that disease through the physical body, and that the best method of treatment is to assist nature in that process. It is not my purpose, however, to attempt an amateur discussion on the subject of medicine, but to suggest that what medicine needs is Theosophy, because until it gets Theosophy it will remain just about as blind as it is to-day.

Then another topic touched upon, which in the nature of things could only be touched upon, was the suggestion that not every member of the Society is doing all that he can to help the Society, or rather, that the load is carried inequitably. There may have been some present who mentally responded: I am doing everything I know how to do. There are in fact some who are doing much; who, outwardly at least, are pulling their full weight. All that they can give, they give. I will not say that anyone is doing his utmost inwardly, but in some cases, the inhibition there is due really to misconception, to self-hypnosis of one kind or another. There are others who really want to help, and who offer, and to whom it seems that their offers are not accepted. They offer to address envelopes, offer to move chairs. When their offers are not accepted, how do they react? I do not believe that they attribute the refusal to the jealousy of the older members, or attribute to them a passion for moving chairs. Clearly, the sensible thing to do is not to blame fate, or the failings of older members, but to ask if it may not be possible that there is some defect or deficiency hidden in oneself. What kind of defect? Well, somebody offers to address envelopes: I happen to know one or two of the younger members whose handwriting is almost illegible and who are perfectly satisfied with it. You could not convince them that it ought to be improved. There are always reasons why it is not just what it ought to be—college, and constantly having to take notes very rapidly —reasons and excuses; no, not an excuse but an "explanation"; and an explanation settles it; there is nothing more to be done. I should suggest that if anyone offers to address envelopes and the offer is not accepted, he should look at his handwriting. You cannot do everything, but, if it be done for the sake of the Movement, there are worse forms of Yoga than to set out to achieve a copper-plate handwriting, absolutely perfect, and in any case legible. It has to be left to the individual to decide just where to draw the line.

Clearly, that may be an indication, not necessarily about handwriting, but about things in general. Suppose the offer is not accepted—there are QUARTERLIES or their envelopes to sort: "very grateful, but somebody else is doing it." That may be true; but supposing some very well meaning individual has done it before and has kept up an incessant chatter all the time,—talk, talk, talk. It may have been very entertaining, even instructive; but possibly that was not the best time to talk, when other people were trying to do some work and to get things done. There are all kinds of explanations possible.

It is imaginable that somebody says—"Oh, can't I do something?" "What can you do, can you typewrite?" "I can typewrite a little." Then something is given to be copied. I wonder if you realize how few there are who can copy any kind of paper accurately, so that it does not have to be compared afterwards with the original, by someone really trained to be accurate. There are appallingly few,—and most of them are women. That goes very deep. You can explain it on the ground of an untrained attention, of lack of concentration; but the real explanation is lack of conscience, lack of heart, lack of love of the Movement,— because if your life depended on it, if the life of your child depended upon it, I believe that

you could manage to be accurate. It would not necessarily follow, because during many previous years, you might have fallen into such habits of inaccuracy that even to save your life or that of your child, you could not achieve it. But granted the interest, the devotion, the conscience, the love,—accuracy could be learned.

People talk about chêlaship. What do chêlas do? Surely the conquest of their defects, for love of their Master and from a desire to serve him, is part of their determination. Suppose then, that a member of the Society wants to help, but, quite unconsciously, cannot resist exploiting himself. He is asked to do something; he does it; puts a good deal of energy, of fire, into it, but unintentionally he does it for the glorification of self. He tells others how much he has done; or he congratulates himself on his superior performance. The trouble is that if self obtrudes itself beyond a certain point in work done for The Theosophical Society, it destroys that which it does. Further, it is more trouble than it is worth,—just trying to get rid of that other person's protruding ego. It used to keep the older people busy most of the time.

Let us assume that in another case, egotism is not the obstacle, but great excitability. Somebody gets extremely excited if anything goes wrong. Then three or four of the so-called Ancients have to come and soothe it down and make it all right again and say "There, there, go home". That takes time and energy, and you would rather have done the task yourself in the first place. So good will is not enough; kindly feeling is not enough; desire to help is not enough. What is needed are those (there is such a thing as the business side of the Society), who are competent to do the work, and who do not require three or four instructors or three or four chêlas, or nursemaids, or anything else to see that a thing is done properly. You cannot leave behind all the ordinary qualifications. Any work requires a certain amount of tact, of consideration for others, of self-effacement, of adaptability, as well as good will. So we should examine ourselves as to the directions in which we perhaps could do more than we are doing, and ask ourselves whether the reason we are not doing more is that we are not competent; that because of personal limitations of some kind or other, it is impossible for the Society—and so for the Masters—to use us as we might wish. Much more could be said about that. The truth of the matter is that those who really want to serve the Movement and not themselves, will very soon make themselves efficient and competent. The fight is against the personality. That is the enemy. The barriers exist within ourselves and not outside of ourselves. We all know this theoretically, but the question is, how many of us act upon that knowledge. It is a commonplace that moral defects create mental defects. Vanity carried to a certain point becomes insanity in increasing degree, and so with all of the moral defects without exception. Long before insanity is reached, these defects result in mental blindness, deadness, inability to see anything straight, hopeless lack of judgment. In so far, therefore, as we are able to recognize our mental limitations, we ought to be able to trace them to our moral defects; and it is our moral defects and nothing else that stand in the way of our service of The Theosophical Society.

This may not seem to have much to do with resolutions, but I suggest that it has everything to do with resolutions. It is a question of overcoming the personality. We have been discussing that at recent meetings of the New York Branch. All religions, and Theosophy itself, exist for the purpose of helping us to recognize the personality as our worst obstacle so long as we identify ourselves with it. We must detach ourselves from it, and then learn to use it as it was intended to be used,—as an organ, an obedient instrument. I wonder whether you remember a story told years ago of an aspirant for chêlaship who went to a Guru and said, "Please, I want to become a chêla." And the Guru or Adept looked at him intently for several seconds, and then said, "Good; go away and disembody yourself mentally, and see to it that you stay disembodied." The aspirant for chêlaship went away, very much impressed, and for six months he worked at it. At the end of six months, he went back to the Guru and sat before him expectantly. The Guru looked at him and said, "Didn't I tell you to *stay* disembodied?" The aspirant for chêlaship disappeared. It took him several years, first to read the riddle, and then to stay disembodied. Finally he did it. This has a great deal to do with work for The Theosophical Society. It is not a counsel of perfection. It is a

perfectly simple suggestion which may be acted upon. We must disembody ourselves mentally, and see to it that we stay disembodied.

There is a certain refreshing breeziness about that story which ought to remove some of the misunderstanding about Masters. It was said by someone the other day—not by me—that there are those in the Society who are becoming too much "Christianized"; that they are too much inclined to think of a Master as someone you sit by and whose hand you hold, and who loves you very much. Of course, that would be a grievous misunderstanding. I can not believe anybody is really guilty of it. But I wonder if all of us realize the terrible virility of Masters. In any case, I think that our conception of them needs to be changed continually. Whatever our idea of Masters a year ago, at the last Convention, to-day our idea of them ought to be truer, ought to be higher; we certainly ought to have eliminated a great many false notions about them. It has been said of the people of India that they are astonishingly tenacious of ideas and customs; that they are very faithful to the past—or used to be—but they have never been good eliminators; they never get rid of anything, never discard anything; and that this is one explanation of why they are to-day so dead spiritually, in a great many cases. We should watch ourselves for that, and see to it that we get rid of wrong ideas, of false conceptions—and there are many false conceptions when it comes to Masters and their character, and to chêlaship and what it involves. We must not confuse it with what goes by the name of saintliness among religious people. I almost regret that we ever used the word discipleship, because it has been so cheapened. It just means, for some people, paddling around in pious feelings.

I am afraid that I have been sounding pessimistic. I do not feel pessimistic. In fact, we must not allow ourselves to be pessimistic. Anybody can see the clouds. The trouble is to see the silver lining. We must learn to take a true view of facts. It was partly for that that The Theosophical Society was founded; it was altogether for that, if you interpret "facts" widely enough, broadly enough. Life, of course, must be seen for what it is,—always remembering that it is never the same for any two people. We cannot afford to dogmatize about it, to speak of it in universal terms; but we must at any cost outgrow the notion that the purpose of life on earth is that we may have "a good time"; that we have a right to happiness. We must leave it to fools to imagine that their right to the pursuit of happiness is worth anything. If they want to exercise the right, they can do so; but they will never find happiness if they pursue it. The further our experience of life penetrates, the more clearly one realizes that it is like the frontline trenches in France. All of us know from what we have read that no two men agree as to just what the experience was like. For some it was undiluted hell. For others it was purgatory. For a few it was paradise. How could it have been paradise? Not by pretending that the facts were other than they were. Everything was inconceivably horrible: around them a hell of noise, a hell of odour; within them a hell of nerves, of responsibility—every sort of hell; yet, because they had surrendered life itself and all that they were and possessed, because of the completeness and perfection of their renunciation, they found for themselves a world of immortality. It is our own fault if we cannot do the same thing here in New York. If we fail to do it, let us not blame others, or fate. Not that any of us can do it to perfection; but let us at least see honestly where the trouble lies. It must lie in incompleteness of self-surrender. On the other hand, without being pessimistic, we must see things as they are, remembering that all the Mahatmas, from the beginning of time, have told us that physical life begins with pain, is carried on with pain, and ends with pain.

That reminds me of another thing: if you should ever find your personality saying it has made some kind of sacrifice for The Theosophical Society or for discipleship, *kill it*—because it will not be true. It cannot possibly be true, and it is an intolerable untruth, for the reason, among many others, that "I go for *refuge* to the Buddha". No one can go to a Master, or within ten thousand miles of a Master, with a sacrifice in his hands; he goes for refuge from the world, and he has not reached the point in evolution when contact with the Lodge is conceivable so long as he says to himself, "I have sacrificed". You will remember about the girl who gave up skirt dancing for astrology. You may be able to imagine a girl saying, "Yes, I will give

up skirt dancing, I will sacrifice skirt dancing, for the sake of discipleship"—and being almost bowed down with wonder at herself for the sacrifice she has made! Have some of us here ever thought of ourselves as surrendering the equivalent of skirt dancing, or the equivalent of astrology,—and been pleased with ourselves for the sacrifice we have made?—the "joys of life" left behind, to become chêlas. Well, try again, try again, little man!

Thus, by the study of human nature as it is, as we see it around us—as, alas, we ought to be able to recognize it in the elementals that we drag about with us, that we call the personality, and with which we perpetually identify ourselves—we ought to learn to recognize the voice of the devil. It was suggested by a friend, a day or two ago, that it is sheer nonsense for people to complain, as they do complain, that they cannot recognize the voice of God, the voice of the Masters, when they listen all day long to the voice of the devil. Why is it that they do not recognize the voice of the devil, and cannot recognize the voice of the Masters? It is because they are listening, entranced, morning, noon and night, to what they take to be their own voices, to their own interior chatter; and without discrimination, without realizing that right discrimination would enable them to hear all three worlds within themselves. Let us make a brave resolution to sacrifice the delights of our own mental conversation. We shall get somewhere if we do that.

It is amazing how simple these things really are; even more amazing is the number of resolutions that ought to be made, particularly at a Convention of The Theosophical Society; and we cannot make too many resolutions,—so long as they are kept. It is splendid, however, if you make one, and really keep it and work it through to its logical end; because if you make one good resolution and really keep it—keep not only its letter but its spirit—you will arrive where you want to arrive. You will find the Supreme. Nothing can stop you. The Convention of The Theosophical Society would then be magnificently fruitful. If one person here were really to reach that goal as the result of a Convention, the future of the Society would be assured.

I am going to ask Dr. Torrey to be so kind (as one of the other members of the Committee on Resolutions) as to take charge of certain formal resolutions.

Dr. Torrey: The resolutions read: First: that Mr. Johnston be requested and authorized to reply to letters of greeting. Second: that the Convention authorizes visits of officers of the Society to Branches. Third: that the thanks of the Convention be extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality extended during the Convention.

I am sure that we have been very much amazed, and rightly so, at the things that Mr. Hargrove has been saying. If these things be true, we are in the condition that exists in some universities to-day, where heads of departments are forced to do the work that men farther down should be doing, simply because they want the thing done right and must therefore do it themselves. The mechanical work should be done by those who are not yet ready to take up the higher kind of work. If we are not ready to do the mechanical work now, how can we be ready to do the higher kind of work when those who are doing it have gone on; and what is going to happen if the thing breaks down?

In addition, I want to express my own deep gratitude for the reception accorded to us here to-day. I am sure we all feel the same way. That is a part of my own resolution.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously carried, that the Report of the Committee on Resolutions be accepted with the thanks of the Convention.

The Chairman: Of course, any discussion of the Report of the Committee should have taken place before, rather than after, that Report was acted upon by the Convention. I am quite out of order, and will sit down if anybody tells me to; but pending their so instructing me, there is one comment I wish to make. What Mr. Hargrove has said to us is recognizably true of each and every one of us. We have all, I am sure, found a way in which what he said applied to ourselves, and have seen something we can do about it,—resolutions that we, individually, can make. I want to add one other suggestion to the practical ones which he outlined. That is, if anybody wishes to help in this Movement, he should stay around, so as to be available when things have to be done. People must not only be competent, able to do the job and to do it without its being too expensive, but they must be available to do it.

If there is something to be done here, and the competent man is in Albany or Oshkosh, he is of no use. That means that we must be content to stand available, even when, apparently, there is nothing for us to do. I think that is a practical suggestion, so I make it. Perhaps I should add: be around without being too much "under foot".

We have reached now the point where, having heard the written word from our distant members—in this case bringing back to us so vividly the presence of many of them at our Convention last year—we can hear from those who are with us in person; from those Branches which have a delegate here to give us their report and good wishes, by word of mouth instead of by letter.

MISS EVANS: I have nothing very different to report this year from other years. We have held our meetings regularly and they are regularly attended. Our membership is small and it has grown very little this year. Our work is informal in character. It hardly seems possible to do it in any other way, with such a small membership. We use the QUARTERLY very constantly, and some reading from the standard books, and we try always to have discussion of some topic that is very much in the public eye,—something that we should make up our minds about as a community. That is the basis of our meetings, and all that I have to report.

MISS WALLACE: I have often longed for such an opportunity as this, to express appreciation of these Conventions and all that they bring to us. I hope that now we shall be able to go back home and to free ourselves from those hindrances which have been so clearly pointed out here,—so that we can put into our work for the T. S. some of the ardour and devotion that is characteristic of the spirit of this Convention.

MR. WAFFENSMITH: First, I must express our gratitude that we could again attend Convention. In Cincinnati our work consists of a public meeting, once a month, at which papers are presented by different members, and are discussed. The rest of our meetings are for members only, and these are devoted to a study class in *The Secret Doctrine*, which has been of such interest and help that it was continued even during the hot months of summer. As recent members, Mrs. Waffensmith and I feel very grateful to those who have maintained the Cincinnati Branch so zealously—keeping the door open until the time came when we could enter it. Theosophy represents to us an open door, and this year I feel that I can pitch my tent a little closer than I could last year.

MR. LEONARD: I remember the admonitions of those who spoke at prior Conventions that we speak what is in our hearts, and I shall endeavour to do that rather than to speak to the subject matter that has been discussed here to-day,—on account of my inability to do so. When I left the West Coast for the East Coast, my objective—the same as with all of you—was a true spiritual centre. The thought has been current in my mind: how fortunate is the Karma of merit of a certain few which enables them to establish a connection between the world and the Lodge of Masters, a link of salvation; and how fortunate has it been for those members of this Society who have had continuous association at this centre; and how fortunate are they who infrequently contact it; and even how fortunate are those members who have even been prevented from attending,—fortunate in the sense that they are members of the Society and that they have the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY as a connecting link. I am happy to be here—in common with your happiness—and when we return to our respective homes, let us take with us some of the available fire for our own regeneration, that we may become better instruments of service in the Cause of the Masters, realizing the great gifts that the Masters bestowed upon us in the restoration of the ancient Truth in the western world which has made possible this meeting here to-day. In loving gratitude to the Masters, we should resolve, in some way at least, to make reciprocal gifts to them, in some way seriously to try to understand ourselves, that we may be better able to checkmate the impediments to our own development, to know that we are divinely equipped, and to learn how to use that equipment for the purpose for which it is intended.

In regard to theosophical activities, some may plead lonely isolation, but it would seem that is due to a misguided imagination. A Master said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Permit me to read a brief passage from Robert Browning's *Paracelsus*. Paracelsus is speaking to Festus:

". . . . from childhood I have been possessed
By a fire—by a true fire, or faint or fierce,
As from without some master, so it seemed,
Repressed or urged its current: this but ill
Expresses what I would convey: but rather
I will believe an angel ruled me thus,
Than that my soul's own workings, own high nature,
So became manifest. . . ."

At the last Convention, both Mr. Johnston and Mr. Hargrove referred to the presence at these annual Convention meetings of departed former earnest workers in the Theosophical Movement,—to me a very natural procedure. I merely refer to it at this time to remind us of the continuity of conscious life on all planes, during a day of Brahma. In the *Gîta*, Krishna speaking, we read: I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth, nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. Also in the *Gîta*, we read: There is no non-existence for that which exists.

It is opportune at this time to speak of theosophical activities, and perhaps it may interest you to know somewhat of the activity on the West Coast. Pacific Branch of Los Angeles holds weekly meetings, every other meeting being devoted to the *Secret Doctrine* class. Our subjects are typed and mailed out to non-resident members, and to some non-members who have requested it, some of whom are subscribers to the QUARTERLY. We have a circulating library, and standard theosophical books for sale. Our librarian, Mrs. Winston, has charge of it. She superintends the re-binding of old magazines and old books and the binding of new volumes of the QUARTERLY. She also looks after the money resulting from the sale of books. We circulate copies of the QUARTERLY among the principal libraries of California and adjacent states,—beginning in Eureka in the Sierras, then south to San Francisco, Oakland, Alameda, Palo Alto where Stanford University is located, San José, and thence further south to San Diego; then to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Arizona, to Reno and Carson City, Nevada, and to Honolulu. In addition, we furnish copies of the QUARTERLY to three ministers of the Gospel, with whom we communicated and who signified their willingness to receive the QUARTERLY,—one of them is a Presbyterian minister. We also have quite a lot of miscellaneous correspondence to attend to, and other matters which require our entire attention all through the year. We never cease to be active during any month in the year.

At the last Convention, Mr. Hargrove said that speakers on these occasions rise to their feet in a sort of agony, from a sense of their immense responsibility, and that always they are dissatisfied with themselves for what they have said. No doubt that is true, and I am referring to it for a purpose. To me, personally, it is due to the fact that we come here more as recipients than with the idea of our ability to make a worthy contribution. In a sense, we who come here from distant places are little children, but less little children than certain little children to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude.

MR. DOWER: The best I can say is that Syracuse is still on the theosophic map. Recently I was re-reading Mr. Judge's *Echoes from the Orient* and was struck with what he said there about this map. It set me to thinking about different ways in which it might be possible to call attention to the work that we are trying to do in Syracuse. The response is not what I wish it were, especially as it is evident that Theosophy is very much needed,—but how to get it to the people who are reaching out their hands for something, they know not what, is a problem that we, in Syracuse, have not yet solved.

MRS. ROSE: Perhaps the best way to express our feeling is to say that Convention is the one real thing of the year for the members of Hope Branch. We have been carrying on the same activities as last year, public meetings in which we discuss the Convention Reports and the Reports of the New York Branch meetings, and a study class, devoted this year to Emerson's Essays. We are very grateful for the privilege of receiving the Report of the New York Branch meetings, and for the fact that through them we may look to those older students who are sometimes called "the Ancients". We are especially thankful for the

QUARTERLY articles by Mr. Johnston, Mr. Griscom and other regular contributors,—some of them we have not seen, but still they are personal friends of ours and we find ourselves turning to them for help. We feel that we have little to give to the Society, but we can give our gratitude.

MRS. LAKE: What Mrs. Rose has said is pre-eminently true of our Branch. We come here in the spirit of longing and expecting to receive, knowing that we are going to get more than enough to go upon until the next Convention, with its fresh inspiration, comes around. I fear we are too far away to be allowed to help set the chairs, using Mr. Johnston's figure, and if we attempted them I am sure that most of them would be crooked. This is my tenth Convention, and I have been asking myself what use I have made of that wonderful privilege. The first Convention, I well remember, was largely a maze to me, but there has been progress—and now I can see a straight path ahead; but there remain the terrible barriers of the personality which make it exceedingly difficult, at times, to keep to the path one sees. To-day it has been made plain to us what we have to do, and now it only remains to do it.

MR. FORBES: It gives Mrs. Forbes and myself great happiness to be at this Convention. There are now three members in Chattanooga. At present we are not able to meet regularly, so have no organized work. Now and again, we encounter those who wish to know what Theosophy is, what it offers as an explanation of life. This gives us an opportunity to lend Theosophical literature and help in any way we can.

Having a young member has recently brought us in contact with a number of young people, who are dissatisfied with orthodox religious teachings, which no longer have any authority for them. There are those who seem to be, at first, rather repelled by the name "Theosophy", and the reading we have suggested is not directly Theosophical, but along the lines of the *Inward Light*, the *Creed of Buddha* and the *Creed of Christ*. They may be thus led to co-ordinate the Christian teaching they have had with the other great religions,—and so gradually come to see the universal and fundamental truths underlying them all and, also, their supporting and complementary relation to the highest thought and feeling of our time. With this gained, and a great gain it would be, they may be ready to go on to the definitely Theosophical teachings, or so we hope.

One would like to say how valuable the QUARTERLY is. It brings a personal and individual message, helping with difficulties, opening up fresh vistas, and shedding light on the problem of the moment. The words, "As his growth slowly develops his intelligence", have been running in my mind for many weeks. Looking back, to-day, four years since I was here, it is with astonishment that one sees how slowly one's intelligence does grow! Mr. Hargrove's address, pointing out to us so clearly the defection of our moral nature, must make us more strongly resolve to elevate our desires and grow in intelligence, so that we may discern and act.

MR. BRYANT: The worst in me comes out at Convention, and the best takes its place,—but I am ashamed and sorry to say that the effect of the last Convention has become thin and attenuated by the time the next one comes along. I think I have discovered a plan that will extend the happiness and benefit that the Convention brings, for, if this one which lasts only a day can do as much for me as it does, clearly I must find a way to extend it. So I plan to go home and put on a 364 day Convention there, by myself. One of my problems will be to find a way of being as theosophically minded throughout my long Convention as one finds it comparatively easy to be here.

DR. TORREY: Perhaps it would be interesting to you to hear of what we are trying to do in the little study class at Amherst. We have been working this year on Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy* and also on some articles from the QUARTERLY. We start at seven-thirty and end at ten o'clock,—and then have to be thrown out! One of the many things that we need to do is to learn to read. People simply do not understand terms and words,—force, energy, matter, will, spirit. They have such a hazy idea of the connotation of such words that they find it very difficult to understand what they denote. We must try to get down to bed rock bottom before we can properly build. This seems elementary, yet I have been surprised to find grown people say that they have never learned to study in that way. They have gone through school

where they were passed on, from one grade to another, in order to get rid of them,—and they now have to learn what sentences mean!

MR. J. F. B. MITCHELL: Mr. Chairman and Fellow Members, I think the first thing we all want to do is to give some expression to our gratitude,—gratitude that we are here, gratitude for what it means to be here. The things I have had in my heart to say have been said, for the most part, and I think it is only a question of phrasing them slightly differently and perhaps bringing several things together.

Take what was written in a letter to the Treasurer: "We are seizing the moment of inspiration to start a little fund". Could there be a better keynote for all of us than to seize the moment of inspiration to start a little fund of spiritual capital with which to buy eyesalve that we may see! Every time we place a chair, every time we address an envelope with that intention, we may start our fund of spiritual capital. That is the first thing for us to do.

In thinking of Convention, I asked myself what the facts were, and what they meant. We know the facts: that we are here at a Convention of The Theosophical Society, founded by the Masters, founded in order to bring to the world a knowledge of its destiny and of its own heart's desire. Several years ago, the simile was used of the members of the Society as besiegers standing on the captured wall of a city, in which was imprisoned the world's desire. Several other walls remained to be taken, but they had surmounted one, and knew that within was the world's desire, the world's happiness, the world's goal. It is knowledge of that goal which the Masters wish to bring to mankind and for which they founded The Theosophical Society. Furthermore, it is the heart's desire of every one in this room,—that life which the Theosophical Movement points out, the spiritual life, the life of service of the Masters, of chêlaship. The point I want to make is, that that is the heart's desire of every one of us here, our path, our goal, our one hope of happiness.

Mr. Hargrove spoke of those who come with "sacrifice" in their hands as being ten thousand miles from the Masters. It is not, and cannot be, sacrifice, because it is the path of our own happiness—a fact that we ought immediately to forget, for we are not to do it from that motive, but because it is the path for the world, and that is what the Society exists for, to bring it to the world.

I asked myself what the Masters who founded the Society would like to have us bring here as we come to its Convention. Gratitude, of course, infinite gratitude; and after that, recognition—recognition of the facts, recognition of what it is that is offered to us, of what it is that we are looking at; recognition, first, of the fact that the Master at the head of our Ray has given to each one of us, as our heart's desire, that path and that goal, chêlaship, the life of the spirit. Because that ideal had become so overlaid, so hidden from our view, that unaided we never should have found it, never should have recognized it, buried as it was beneath the heaped up débris of self,—they have brought down, through the Theosophical Movement, a representation of that pearl of great price, that, seeing it outwardly we may recognize it inwardly, and recognizing it inwardly we may follow it and give ourselves to it wholly and completely.

It is comparatively easy to see that here. We come here and recognize perhaps, that it is our heart's desire. We recognize now something of the infinite value of the experience of the older members, of our need for it, something of the world's need for it; and now we long to receive it, to draw out all that we can of it, to take it into ourselves, and to register it there permanently. This is the moment of inspiration that we ought to seize. Unfortunately, it does not always last. We do not always know, as we know at this moment, that it is our heart's desire, that there is and can be no such thing as sacrifice in service. So we must seize the moment of inspiration now, must remember it, impress it upon ourselves, go forward with faith and courage that does not permit of doubt, resolve now that we will not permit ourselves to doubt for one moment that it is our heart's desire,—so that when the inspiration, now being given us as a free gift, has passed, and darkness has come on again, we shall go on in that darkness like a traveller caught in the night, who sees, by a lightning flash, his home and his goal, and turns his face toward it. The night may come down again, he may stumble over rocks and roots, but he has seen his direction, and his goal, and he knows the way. Now is

the time to impress that on our minds, so that when the darkness comes we may be prepared to hold steadily on our path, and may go on "placing our chairs", and clearing the channel to the consciousness which is the deepest desire of our own souls.

MR. PERKINS: While Mr. Hargrove was speaking to-day of the need for new chêlas from the ranks of the Society, I was asking myself, how many of us does he mean? I tried to reason it out: how many of us are there here to-day who, when we woke this morning, knew that it was the same man or woman who went to sleep last night? During the period of unconsciousness of the body, there had been a thread of consciousness that had continued. We knew this morning—we were positive of it—that the man who woke is the same man who went to sleep. We have been told so many times that a similar continuity of consciousness ought to last over the periods that we call death. If there be this continuity of consciousness, then we also know that there is a continuity of responsibility and of opportunity, because these always go with consciousness.

I was reading some letters that Madame Blavatsky wrote to the Conventions of our Society in the last three or four years before her death, in 1891. She was making an appeal. She was telling us of the period of psychism into which the world was going, into which we, as members of the Society, were sure to pass. She was making an appeal—to us—to all members who would come into the Society afterwards—just the same appeal that Mr. Hargrove has made to-day. It comes down to us, from Madame Blavatsky, from Mr. Judge. The echo of that call comes even from those who have served the Lodge in former ages, when Theosophy was probably known under another name. Through whatever channel the urge may come to us, an answer must be made, a resolution must be carried into act and life. May it be that of selfless service of the Eternal, of the Lodge—the resolve to chêlaship.

DR. CLARK: Often when I try to speak to friends about the theosophical life, speaking in as guarded a manner as I can, they receive an impression that I should like to drag them from a pleasant garden, which they much enjoy, for the purpose of imprisoning them in what would be to them a vale of tears. Some of those friends appear to be well fitted to enter the ranks of the Theosophical Movement, and it always disappoints me that I cannot share with them truths that are my most precious possession. A similar difficulty may have troubled other members. What help can be found for such a problem?

The life and work of the poet Virgil seem to throw light upon the matter. From what is written in the sixth book of his *Æneid* (teaching concerning Karma and Reincarnation), Virgil might be thought of as having a foothold in the spiritual world which would lead him to view the material world as little better than a shadow, as an abyss of misery. It is just that view of worldly life that his verse expresses, his most quoted phrase being *lacrimæ rerum*, the "tears of things". What impression, however, do people who are not interested in Theosophy receive, century after century, from this theosophical verse, if we may so regard it? An incident in the life of Edmund Gosse seems a typical answer to that question. As a boy of nine years, Gosse was being starved in a narrow world of sectarian dogma from which everything that savoured of the imagination had been rigorously excluded. One afternoon, in a spell of day-dreaming, the elder Gosse repeated aloud some Virgilian lines remembered from school-days. Immediately, the boy was on his feet, crying out in excitement: "What is that, Father? what is that?" Although the father would not satisfy his son's questioning, that single repetition fixed the lines in the boy's memory, and gave him entrance into a new and magical world.

Why should Virgil's poetry have that effect upon so many persons? Something of the devotion that Virgil put into the composition of his verse, we know—that he amended it assiduously, so that a solitary line would sometimes be the only result of a whole day's effort. Stricken with mortal illness at an early age, he was cut off from the ten years of revision that he had planned for the *Æneid*, and directed that it should be burned on account of its lack of finish. Only the Emperor's intervention rescued the manuscript from the flames, for grateful posterity. It is those crude (to Virgil's judgment) verses that have opened to many men the gate into an enchanted world.

Is not the conclusion obvious? Virgil put heart and mind and soul into his opportunity.

Alien though his form of expression may be, there is, nevertheless, something in the very atmosphere of his verse that can lift modern men out of their cramped, material interests into larger vistas. If, in our turn, we were to put heart and mind and soul into the very great opportunity that is ours—to live the theosophical life—might not the consequence be somewhat similar? In speaking to friends about the truths of theosophy, our faulty words might be permeated with an atmosphere of devotion through which some one might rise above the doubts and debates of his own mind to the nobler planes of life.

Mr. LaDow: Two or three speakers this afternoon have made reference to the fire from above and to our need to seize it and to keep it. This recalls a question asked at a recent meeting of the New York Branch, which unfortunately I cannot quote exactly. The purport of it was this: What must we do to act rightly? Is it always necessary to go and find the fire from heaven, to reach up for it—must we always go through that gesture, that motion? It has occurred to me many times during the Convention that we need not go far to find that fire; that the Masters have made it easy for us to find it, for it is here; it surrounds us; it is the one life which bathes us. Here and now, we have the opportunity to come in contact with a real spiritual life. The trouble is with ourselves. Our personal consciousness tends automatically to respond, not to the pure fire from above, but to its reflection in matter. Our instinctive desires—and that means our instinctive impulses to action—are brought into being by the fact that all that seems to interest us when we are not being coddled along, is the dregs of life, its shadows, things which appear so ridiculous here to-day, and yet who knows whether, in a week, they may not again assume a titanic shape.

How have we fallen into such bad habits? One answer is that we have persisted, life after life, in giving attention to a certain kind of pernicious thought, and in yielding ourselves to a certain kind of pernicious action, until we have built up an unreal self which lives by wrong thought and by wrong action. What we have got to do is to build a new self. We must cease to be immersed in the material and psychic manifestations of the one life, and must learn to respond to its spiritual manifestations.

It has been said this afternoon, as it has been said again and again, ever since the time of Lucifer and Prometheus who first brought the fire from heaven, that the way to begin to build this new self is to pay attention to thoughts which we know pertain to the real, and to act deliberately, even though it be against the grain, in accordance with all that we can understand of our duty. Like many ancient truths, this sounds like a platitude. But a platitude often contains a spark of the Eternal Wisdom.

Mr. Auchincloss: Mr. Chairman, my mind has been turning all day long, and my heart too (especially since the reading of the letters of greeting) to those members who were here last year, who came from such long distances,—Colonel Knoff, Mrs. Bagnell and others. At this time a year ago there were many of us who had wanted to know and meet them. When we did meet them, there was nothing strange about it at all. We knew them already and had always known them. This year, they are not here, but they are not absent and never will be absent again. I should like to thank them for one of the things they did by coming last year: they emphasized the closeness of the tie that binds us here with all the members of the Movement in distant parts of the earth. Time and space and distance simply do not exist, really! It is not that we are sorry they are not present to-day, and that we miss them; but that we are so glad they are here with us.

Mr. Acton Griscom: Mr. Chairman, I do not think that any of us could have listened to what was said this morning and again this afternoon, with an undercurrent at times that seemed almost of desperation, without finding it in our hearts to respond, to want to offer ourselves again, to want to make good in the way that those older and wiser wish us to make good.

Year after year at Convention, we have heard this appeal. Year after year, to a certain extent, our hearts have responded. We have wished to do this thing, to give ourselves, to pass through the gate. The fact that that appeal is made again to-day is, to a certain extent, proof positive that we have not achieved that which the "Ancients" hoped we might achieve. We have not done it and yet we want to, and we must tell them that we want to, and that we are here for the one purpose and desire of trying to make sufficient resolution, *really* this time,

to succeed,—not for our own sakes but for their sakes, for the sake of the Masters who founded this Society and the Theosophical Movement.

I was thinking during lunch why it was that as part of what Mr. Hargrove had to say to us this morning, he spoke about science and the limitations of science. Obviously there are many of us who are looking for the best in science, who have seen it grow and improve since the time when Madame Blavatsky first began her attacks against dogmatism and narrow-mindedness. But there must be something deeper, and it occurred to me to apply the principles, the mistaken attitudes of science, to oneself, and to discover if possible whether we ourselves are children of our generation, which is, at present, pre-eminently a generation given over to science (it looks to science for its ideals and its religion), whether we are not children of our generation, at least in part of our natures, doing the same thing and making the same mistakes. The answer to that is, Yes. Science wants to study facts. It says it does not, cannot, know very much about religion and the spiritual life. To a certain extent, we are doing the same thing,—looking at our natures, problems, difficulties, and up to a certain point recognizing them, studying them; but constantly we exclude the light of the spiritual world. We do not apply the principles of the spiritual life to the facts of everyday existence. Because of that, we are unable to cope with, properly to interpret and understand our own lower natures. They run away with us. They lead us astray. They take us where we do not wish to go,—just as science with all its inventive ability is finding that its discoveries are being used for the destruction of mankind—its guns, its murderous gases and so forth. We have more opportunity to save ourselves to-day than the scientist, because at least we have some understanding, some recognition of spiritual law and of the spiritual world. We see ourselves as a house divided against itself, a higher nature and a lower nature; and somehow or other we have got to discover how to apply, to bring down the principles of the spiritual life which we desire, which we respond to here at these Conventions, into the facts of our personalities.

The last paragraph in the April issue of the "Screen of Time" has already been referred to, where it was suggested that the keynote of this Convention would be silence or stillness, and that it was hoped that people leaving this Convention would speak not so much of its force as of its stillness. There we could make a practical application of how to bridge the gap between our understanding and recognition of the spiritual world, limited as that understanding may be, and of the world of our daily consciousness, the facts of everyday life. We could attempt daily to feel something of the silence, of the note of spiritual sound as the *Voice of the Silence* paraphrases it,—that voice of the silence of which we are dimly conscious here at Convention time. I believe that if we took only five minutes or three minutes, every day out of the three hundred and sixty-five between us and the next Convention, and sought the silence, sought that which we feel in the background of all that has been said, looked for the depth in the heart of this Convention, contributed to by the hearts of each individual member both here and here in spirit,—if we made it a practice for three minutes, five minutes, every day between now and the next Convention to retire into ourselves, and seek that silence and what else is hidden therein, it would go a long way to enable us to do and to accomplish that which the "Ancients" are asking of us.

MR. SAXE: It is not surprising that our minds should all move along about the same line toward the end of Convention to-day. What little I have to say is not very different from what has already been said. An experience which we all had as children was something like this: we were at school; we were seven, eight or nine years old; we were trying to study our lesson. We looked up for a moment from our book to the teacher. He motioned to us to come up to his desk. Our heart beat faster. We went, and were given a very important commission—to go upstairs, two flights up, to the principal's office, where we never had been sent before, to give him a message,—a message that the class would be ready in ten minutes. That did not mean much to us, perhaps, but we knew it was *very* important! We went down the hall. Other boys may have been in the hall or on the stairs and they may have called to us, but they were of no importance in comparison with our commission. We went upstairs, found the principal, delivered our message, and went back again to our room with a feeling of accomplishment and relief in our hearts.

We have all had the experience of having an important message to deliver. It is a feeling and consciousness that we are well acquainted with. We can use that knowledge and experience to carry out some of the ideas which have been presented to us so clearly to-day, because obviously each and every one of us will have a message, and that message may be expressed in many different ways. One way would be to remember that we have a message to give to the world when we start out each morning—a message of what I might call the atmosphere, the consciousness of the T. S. Convention. In other words, whether we are walking up the street, or whether we are in our office or in our church, or wherever we are, to the extent that we are able to recall the consciousness, the feeling, the point of view which we have when at Convention—better still, perhaps, to use our imaginations, and to see that consciousness of ours as like unto a little spring, trickling into the muddy pool of the world's atmosphere—to that extent, at least, we shall be contributing to the Cause, and helping the world around us.

Of course, such a suggestion as this might easily be misunderstood. It might add to our feeling of self-importance, or its meaning be twisted in many ways, but I do not believe there is danger of this. Such a line of thought has sometimes been of help to me, and it comes to me forcibly at this time.

MR. MILLER: I am sure that all the members of the New York Branch share with me the feeling to which Mr. Auchincloss referred, of the great comradeship that we experience in having with us our members from distant points, and, having once known them, of regarding them as with us in spirit thereafter. We know that we have a common mind and common experience, and it seems to me that the same thought applies to those who have gone before and whose pictures are on the walls,—the founders of the Movement and those who have done so much for it since.

That brings me to something that was said to-day by Mr. Hargrove and Professor Mitchell in the way of calling our attention to what we might do and are not doing. It seems to me that a gentle hint, such as the statement that the burden is inequitably distributed, should shame us into seeing that that condition does not continue. Also, Professor Mitchell's suggestion that we can simply stand by, waiting, reminds us that "they also serve who only stand and wait". In order to be ready to serve, we must do something to make ourselves fit, and if we have not been called upon in various directions in which we have imagined ourselves fit, it is our duty to inquire what is lacking in us. That is where the keynote of the Convention comes in: only in silence and by quietly searching ourselves can we discover what these hindrances are.

Those of us who have come to these Conventions for five years, ten years or more, have perhaps fallen into the condition to which Mr. Box referred, when he spoke last year of admonition after admonition. We have perhaps been beaten into a sort of insensibility; but the reason for that is that we have not acted on these admonitions. They fall on deaf ears. To revert to what was said this morning, those of us who are responsible for this inequitable distribution of the work should recognize the fact that a sense of decency and of loyalty to our leaders should compel us to see that this condition is remedied.

MR. KOBBÉ: I have little to add, but I should like to thank, on behalf of myself and perhaps of others who are members of the New York Branch, those delegates from out of town who are here to-day, and also the members-at-large. I think it is delightful,—the way they tell us that they come to receive and have nothing to give, and then stand up and give! It is a very good lesson also to many of us who are here all the time—we who are so beautifully hedged in as we know—to compare ourselves with those who stand somewhere alone, out of town, in the outposts, on the frontiers. There is not the hedging in there, that we have. It seemed to me this morning that those appeals that were made could be especially taken to mind and heart by those of us whose privilege it is to be living here in New York.

There have been many remarks made about the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, and I was hoping that somebody would mention that the April number is Volume XXV, No. 100. I should love to see that written into the records of this Convention.

I have been thinking also of how we can best apply in some practical way what was said this morning about not "leaning on", but carrying on. I have been looking for something

that would apply, not only to us who are here all the time, but to those who are out of town, some of them at a great distance. All who have come from out of town and have spoken to us, and most of the letters from distant Branches, have expressed in one way or another gratitude to the QUARTERLY, gratitude to the editors of the QUARTERLY. There is one absolutely practical way, it seems to me, that every one of us can carry, and not "lean on". We all have duties, and this can be put into each and every one of them. It is that we should consider ourselves, each and every one of us, as continually contributing to the QUARTERLY, whether we write a line for it or not—because The Theosophical Society has a common mind, has an oversoul, and as we contribute to that oversoul we contribute to the QUARTERLY; and we can do that, all of us, all the time, wherever we may be and whatever we have to do.

MR. ARMSTRONG: I have felt it a great privilege to be here to-day. I think we all get a large amount of inspiration from these Conventions. That which stands out particularly in my mind as the result of what has been said this morning and this afternoon, when we younger members were admonished "to do something about it", is that the most difficult part of it is to begin. It has been my own experience and that of other young engineers, that when we attempt to design a piece of apparatus, we are inclined to sit and wonder where to put the first line. It frequently seems as if the hardest thing in designing the apparatus were to decide where to put that first line—just as though it mattered. It does not really matter, because you can always rub it out and put it somewhere else. The difficulty that we face is to begin; and all I can say about it is that the important thing is to put that first line, that first act, *somewhere*. I think it is probably much better to make a mistake and put it in the wrong place, than it is to sit wondering where to put it.

DR. WOODWORTH: I have been asking myself why we are so slow to do these things that we are told are expected of us. Not only are there many lines pointed out to us, but everything seems to point in the same direction. One of the members was suggesting to me that whether in music, in art, or in daily life, there are always things that point toward the door that is open. It is mostly a question of making up our minds to get busy.

MISS RICHMOND: One thought about chêlaship has been going through my mind, especially while Mr. Griscom was talking. We have heard all our lives: "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." What would happen if we all really believed it!

THE CHAIRMAN: If there be no further business to come before us, we have drawn near to the time when we ought to adjourn. I have one thing to confess,—something I want to say. Every little while I find myself insulting the intelligence of those who come here. It is an anonymous insult. I do not attach doubts and suspicions to anyone in particular, but I ask myself: is it possible that someone thinks thus and so,—in a way in which a really intelligent and sensible person would not think. The question in my mind at the present time, having heard much said of the "Ancients" and of the younger members, and of the inequitableness of the distribution of the burden,—my insult to the intelligence of my anonymous hearer is to wonder whether he thinks that the "Ancients" believe that they are adequate to their tasks, have been carrying their share of the burden, have been aiding, as they ardently long to aid, the Masters whose Movement this is.

I said that the terrible thing about what Mr. Hargrove was saying to us was its truth, its application to each and every one of us,—our inadequacy: the way in which we permit something that seems only a small and unconsidered weakness, some little self-indulgence that we do not really care a rap about, to stand in the way of a service that with all our hearts we long to render and do not render. If some of us are overburdened, the Masters and their chêlas may have to take our places so constantly that they are more overburdened still. The truth of what Mr. Hargrove was saying applies to all members. It applies most keenly to those who most long to serve: they are the most conscious of the inadequacy of their service.

Another question is whether or not this Convention will seem to you, as you go out, to have been marked by silence, and whether a word of reconciliation may not be necessary between that keynote and what I, at least, did my utmost to urge you to feel, and that is that you are called to battle, called to a test which will search all you are, and which you can only pass

as you give all you are; and that that test is not in some remote future, but is now, at hand. Superficially that seems not quite in consonance with silence, and yet science itself—and I was told that I was overkind to science, and I agree—science, even as taught and misrepresented, is beginning to suggest to us that stillness, if pushed to its extreme, can be as potent a force as any that is known. We have but to cool substances below that point of inner agitation which now marks them—that constant interplay and interference and eddy currents of atom against atom—we have but to cool substances down to stillness, to find that we are generating in them an explosive force that may utterly disrupt them.

There is much that needs disruption in the world and in ourselves, from which we must free ourselves before we can liberate our energies. Perhaps we shall find that liberating power in stillness of the soul, in stilling the voices of the body and of the mind that we may receive the voice of guidance and inspiration from above. It is only as we do reach outward somehow, open somehow our own natures to the current of life that flows from above, and close ourselves to that which comes from below, that we shall be able to fulfil our task, or be able even to make those resolutions which we are not asked to adopt as a Convention, but of which we have seen the need, and can as members adopt. It is only as we reach towards stillness that we shall find the will and the desire to make these personal resolutions, and find the strength to carry them out. Only as we do something of that kind can we make our mission in the world effective, and fulfil the trust that has been imposed upon us by the Masters and handed on to us by our predecessors. Only so, too, can we fulfil the desire to serve, which I think is the most real, the most potent and the uppermost desire in the hearts and minds of all members of this Convention as it comes to a close,—that something of that inequitableness of the burden of the salvation of the race from its own folly, something of that heavy burden of sacrifice and agonizing love and ceaseless labour and thwarted endeavour, may be lifted from the Masters to ourselves, and that they may be given the only reward they can be given: that their sacrifice shall be made fruitful in the hearts and lives of those for whom it was made.

Upon motion, duly seconded, it was voted that the Committee on Credentials and the Committee on Resolutions be discharged with the thanks of the Convention. It was then voted to adjourn.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.

JULIA CHICKERING,
Assistant Secretary of Convention.

LETTERS OF GREETING

ARVIKA, SWEDEN.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: All members of the Branch send you their fraternal and hearty greetings, and the best wishes for the incoming year. May you and your work be blessed.

Fraternally yours,
AMY ZETTERQUIST,
Chairman, for the Arvika Branch.

AUSSIG, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

To the Members in Convention Assembled, New York: The members of the Aussig Branch T. S. send you fraternal greetings. May the Convention find us all more ready, willing and able to carry out the will of the Masters, and give us renewed determination to go forward to the heart of life.

We will go with you, and we are sincerely thankful always for assistance, for the great privilege, the grace to go with you to the Lord's table.

Sincerely and fraternally,

HERMANN ZERNDT,
President, Aussig Branch T. S.

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, the members of the Whitley Bay Branch send sincere fraternal greetings. The holding of Convention year after year symbolizes the idea of continuity, and to be continuous it must be real. All our members therefore unite in thought with you, so that the present Convention may be a real effort on the part of all, to express their ideals of truth, reality, and unity, which form the fundamental teachings of Theosophy.

With best wishes,

Yours fraternally,

FREDK. A. ROSS,
President, Blavatsky Lodge.

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Greetings from the Cincinnati Branch.

That all of us may grow through *Recollection* and *Detachment* is our earnest wish.

HERMAN F. HOHNSTEDT,
President.
AGNES MCCORMACK,
Secretary.

MISS MARGARET D. HOHNSTEDT wrote: There is nothing I would rather do than attend the annual Convention. . . . But I am sure the spirit of the Convention will reach me, for how can it be otherwise. More and more I realize the wonderful privilege that is ours; words fail me to express myself. My prayer is that I may prove worthy.

GATESHEAD-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members in Convention: The Gateshead members send their greetings to all assembled, and our best wishes for the success of the Convention. We are sorry we cannot be with you in the body, but we shall send you the best of thoughts.

Yours very sincerely,

PERCY W. WARD,
Secretary, W. Q. Judge Lodge.

SANFERNANDO DE APURE, VENEZUELA.

To the T. S. in Convention Assembled: The members of the "Jehoshua" Branch send their sincere greetings.

The Branch has been sustained by a concentrated effort of high thought and its work inclined to a loving reverence to Masters. To "feel" Masters, members are obliged to work thoroughly for purification of *mind, word* and *action.*

Our hearts will be with you during the Convention, and you have our best wishes for a very successful session.

D. SALAS BAÏZ,
President.

EAST BOLDON, CO. DURHAM, ENGLAND.

To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled: The Members of the Krishna Branch, South Shields, send greetings and best wishes for the success of the Convention.

We look forward to the Convention each year, with real hope and joy; realizing, although many miles separate us, that the "fellowship of kindred hearts" is a very real thing. We "feel" the "Unity" which is between us, and sense some of the spiritual elevation of the Convention.

We trust all will be strengthened for a new year of effort consecrated to the Masters' work in the world.

Fraternally yours,
H. MAUGHAN,
Secretary.

MIDDLETOWN, OHIO.

To the Members in Convention Assembled: It is indeed a very great pleasure for us to send greetings to our fellow members from all over the world. May the "Great Master of the Universe" give us Light and Understanding, that we may continue, another year, to spread "Truth" to all Humanity.

Yours fraternally,
ROSSIE JANE WHITTLE,
Secretary.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: It seems, as the years go by, that life is more strenuous and exacting, and that we need all our love and devotion and understanding to carry us through.

We are thankful, therefore, that we have weathered the storms, completed the voyage, and come to port—the Convention—once again. So we would hasten to greet you most heartily on this memorable occasion (and all these occasions *are* memorable), that you may feel our interest and the spirit of our presence in your deliberations to-day.

We feel that we need to brace ourselves, and to gird on our spiritual armour for the next phase of the battle, that we may be prepared and not found wanting: that, like "the fearless warrior" referred to in *The Voice of the Silence*, realizing that no sacrifice is too great, we also may go forth determined to give our fullest contribution to the Work of the T. S. and all that it stands for. Assuredly, then, as we do this we shall be whole-hearted and one-pointed in the Masters' service.

With best wishes for an inspiring and invigorating Convention, from which all may be stronger and more alert,

On behalf of the Members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Lodge,
Believe me to be,
Yours faithfully and fraternally,
E. HOWARD LINCOLN,
President.

AYLSHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

To the Secretary T. S.: I am requested by the members of the Norfolk Branch to send the greetings and best wishes of the Branch for the Convention. We have no Delegate this year, unfortunately, but we shall be with you in thought and in spirit, and I think we find that each year the limitations of time and space grow less, and become of little real importance—for it is the things that are not seen that are eternal—while the bond that unites us, fellow students and workers for a common cause, becomes stronger and more real. We are much helped by

the excellent reports of the meetings of the New York Branch, which we find most inspiring, and we are very grateful for them. They bring with them something of the atmosphere of the Movement, and help us to realize the wonderful work which you are all doing—and we are filled with gratitude for the privilege of thus sharing in the life which exists only to serve the Master. I have little to report. Our Branch has neither gained nor lost any members. We continue our study by correspondence, and by the circulation of papers, commenting on the study, each member asking questions which are answered by the others. We devoted the month of August to the study of the Convention Report, which we had received in the July QUARTERLY, and since then we have taken *Light on the Path*, which we are still doing.

We pray that the Convention may be a very good one, and shall look forward to hearing about it. With all best wishes, and our fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,
ALICE GRAVES,
For the Norfolk Branch.

Mrs. Graves also wrote:—I have sent the report of the year's work, with the greetings of the Norfolk Branch to the Convention, to Miss Perkins, but I want to say further how much I, in common with all our members, shall be with you in thought and spirit next week. As you know, our Branch is a very small and scattered one, and we can never all meet to talk of the work; but I think that in some ways we gain by this, though the disadvantages appear to be great. We study and work by correspondence, and for this a greater effort is needed than in personal communication. We learn to know each other through the inner senses only, and thereby escape the distractions caused by personality. The "comments" written each month on the study, throw light upon its meaning, by the expression of the different points of view of the students. I do not know if I am right in thinking that at the present time, individual inner work is required more than the outward expression. The world is such a terrible place, with its turmoil and chaos, its superficiality and self-seeking; the craze for sensation, excitement, noise, and the continual search for pleasure, are appalling; and the many cults that have sprung up, so-called new-thought, spiritualism, the many sects, some of whom call themselves Theosophists, Anthroposophists, and other such names, make it impossible for the few of us who are trying to live the Theosophical life to attempt any propaganda. It is difficult not to be dismayed and discouraged, but we have had such great privileges, and so much help has been given when it has really been needed, that I do not think our faith is failing us. We have been told that those who are with us are more than those who are against us, and we know that the Black forces must ultimately be defeated. Though it is impossible for me to attend the Convention personally, I shall feel much more a part of it this year, because of what Mrs. Bagnell has told me of it, from her personal experience of last year. She has brought the spirit and atmosphere much nearer, and has told me of the wonderful power and force and devotion which fill those days. As we grow older in this life, and perhaps nearer to the heart of the things that are real, we find that space and time and distance do not really exist, and I am very grateful for being allowed to share in the thought and the light that you and those who have worked so long and learnt so much, possess, and for your help in our studies, the QUARTERLY, and the reports of the meetings of the New York T. S. Branch. And more than all, for the knowledge of the sympathy and understanding that I feel you have for our efforts, poor and unworthy though these are. We try to keep a little centre here for the Masters' intention, and we pray that we may not fail in faith and devotion, and in the desire for discipleship. May the Convention be a very happy and united one to you all, and through you, to us here.

Mrs. Bagnell wrote:—This will reach you before Convention, and although I know that Mrs. Graves has sent in her usual report and a letter of greeting from the Norfolk Branch, I feel that I must send you a few words of personal greeting and ardent good wishes for its success. Last year I had the great happiness of being present at the Convention, and I need not say how much I wish that it had been possible for me to go again this year. As I

cannot do that, I am trying in every way to prepare for it, so that I may really be there in spirit, and perhaps be able to add my tiny mite of spiritual life and force to it.

I have been studying H. P. B.'s "Esoteric Character of the Gospels", and a sentence in it impressed me profoundly. She says: "We are now in 1887 and the nineteenth century is close to its death. The twentieth century has strange developments in store for humanity, and may even be the last of its name." We are seeing how this prophecy is being fulfilled, and it seems to me that in the last year or two, events have been moving with increasing rapidity. One is appalled at times when one gets some realization of what is going on in the world at present, and above all what underlies it all.

As members of the T. S., who have received so much, our responsibilities are very great, and in Convention we have a chance of proving that we realize this, and are anxious to prove our gratitude to the Masters in some practical manner. I greatly like what has been said in the April "Screen of Time" about the stillness that should be the chief characteristic of this year's Convention. There is no force so great as stillness, and surely there can never have been a greater need for it in the world than there is at the present day. So I hope that at this Convention the members may not only feel but contribute to its stillness and make of it the keynote of their lives during the coming year.

Miss Bagnell wrote:—I have been thinking much of "preparation for Convention". You will receive the greetings of the Norfolk Branch, but I want to send this line of greeting and good wishes. You know that all our thoughts will turn to Headquarters, and we shall hope to be near in heart, remembering that we had the great happiness of being in New York last year. I hope it will, as always, be a time of inspiration and renewed determination, with the Presence of the Leaders to set our hearts on fire; and may we all respond to our utmost.

OSLO, NORWAY.

The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: From Members of the Oslo Branch, Norway,—Greetings. We join you to-day in mind, heart and spirit, and pray that your deliberations may resound with eternal harmonies, and convey the Lodge-Force to all Branches and faithful workers of the Society, thereby helping us to serve the Masters according to their will.

Fraternally yours,
THS. KNOFF,
Chairman.

Colonel Knoff also wrote:—The opportunity and privilege I had last year to attend the Convention, and several of the Branch meetings, and to associate with so many prominent workers in the T. S., has been of the greatest importance and help to me. I shall always remember this great event in my life with heartfelt thanks. I feel so close to you all, and the meetings at 64 Washington Mews are, to me, living pictures never to be forgotten.

The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is a real spiritual source, and so are the Reports of the meetings of the New York Branch, at which you always discuss some most practical question of daily life and of our inner development. They are as lighthouses showing us the way ahead.

Recently there has been a great controversy in the newspapers in Oslo between the orthodox and the liberal Lutheran clergy. . . . . Such religious controversies may serve as a harrowing and weeding of the field, preparing it for a powerful growth of the seeds already sown, and to be sown, in order to make the harvest a rich one. Similar circumstances may exist in other places, though different in their outer manifestations. Looking at it in this way, it gives courage and consolation in our often seemingly fruitless work nowadays. Therefore, our little Branch is of good cheer and ready to work on patiently and with unimpaired courage and faith, knowing that, though our ability to do outer work in order to help others is weak, the most valuable work is performed individually by what we are. There is, then, excellent work for us to do, and at all times; and the work must be done.

Though not personally present at the Convention I shall try to be very close to you all in spirit when the time comes, thus hoping to share a little in the tremendous spiritual force then placed at your disposal. Please remember me cordially to all friends at the Convention last year who may be present at the coming Convention also.

CARACAS, VENEZUELA.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: On the solemn occasion of our Annual Convention the members of the Venezuela Branch send to their comrades in work and purpose their most fervent fraternal greetings, and join in the festival of spirit made flesh by this gathering of souls in the discussion of what most concerns Humanity.

We shall be separated on the physical plane by the mayavic distance of this world of three dimensions, but shall be united in that world where love makes everything of the present. On the same day and at the same hour we shall also assemble here, and as we cause the fire of our aspirations to rise to the heights, the Masters will behold but one flame.

This communion is maintained not only on the ineffable occasion of the hour of our Convention, but lives burning in the greater part of our souls; in it we move and have our being, blossom and grow. And so, in giving you an account of our local activities, we recognize that these are not simply the result of *our* work only, but the *local* expression of the collective Soul of our Society, which works here through the medium of our Branch and its members as vehicles; and we feel overwhelmed by the weight of so great a responsibility; overwhelmed by the thought of how different would have been the result were it not for our faults and omissions, for our poverty in real love. In stating the fact, at the same time we endeavour to strengthen our conscience in order to perform with efficiency from this time forth the task assigned us, making use of the past as our teacher. A communication of this kind, then, is not alone the actual relation of what has been done, but also of what we purpose to do. For an examination of conscience must include in itself the purpose of amendment—a vision of the future through the telescope of the past.

This year we shall not have the pleasure of seeing ourselves represented among you by a delegate from our own body, notwithstanding our desire to send one. But we accept this impossibility with resignation, doing the best we can on our part to leave the results to the Great Law.

The programme of our Branch meetings and studies has been carried out in its entirety, no interference with it being permitted for any cause. In all of them greater attention is observed, better fulfilment of duty, more loyal comradeship, the devotional note being predominant in all.

Among the subjects studied during the year we will note the following as the most important: Socialism in the light of Theosophy; Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement; and—what most stirred the majority of the members—Christianity and the Christ, in their relation to Theosophy. The inestimable QUARTERLY affords us on every occasion boundless service.

Our plan of translations follows its course. The principal translations appear in *El Teosofo*, but we are also preparing to publish, when occasion permits, the principal works in our literature which have not yet been translated into Spanish. A special fund has been created for the publication of the Letters of Mr. C. A. Griscom.

Special themes for our consideration have always been,—the mercy and the justice of the Masters, and the necessity of turning to them as an indispensable requisite for the genuine student of Theosophy: a duty which calls for great and arduous toil, but which at the same time, as Mr. Johnston says, constitutes an immense and ever-increasing delight. This is the case with many of our members. Speaking collectively we can say that the Branch has taken Theosophy most seriously. As soon as we learned the watch-words which Mr. Johnston gave at the last Convention—to work for the Movement persistently, with renewed enthusiasm, with firm and strong resolution, at every moment of life, day after day, hour after hour—there was rooted in the consciousness of this Branch the resolution to respond, and in the hearts of many lives the determination which will be translated into the ineffable recompense

of serving consciously in the work of the New Messenger of whom Mr. Johnston spoke to us at the opening of the Convention.

The Venezuela Branch, then, is endeavouring in the most loyal and diligent manner to co-operate in the general work assigned to The Theosophical Society by its Master Founders, and to make itself worthy of passing on the light which it receives, first in its own country, and then throughout all the Spanish-speaking world; and it knows that it can do nothing by itself, but works to be the vehicle to respond unwearyingly. The Branch believes that it has proof of this, for, casting a glance over itself, it sees that many hearts have greater courage, a greater thirst for justice—although they express it in their own way—and that it diffuses an atmosphere which regenerates and elevates.

Our work for the year might be summarized as follows: On the physical plane,—order, urbanity; on the ethical,—a closing up of the ranks on the journey toward a more definite and better comprehended ideal; on the spiritual,—interest in the purpose of Christianity; a readiness for service and sacrifice.

With gratitude to the Master Founders for this new blessing of being permitted to assemble in their name, to them we make our supplication that this Convention may inspire us with renewed zeal and furnish us with a new weapon.

A. González-Jiménez,
Corresponding Secretary.

N. B. This message is a composite of the various messages formulated by the members of the Branch.

La Guayra, Venezuela.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled in the City of New York: It is a great pleasure to be able to send you in this communication cordial greetings on the occasion of your Convention this year, and I do so with my best wishes and most sincere heart's desires.

For some time past, since reading Mr. Johnston's reply to my letter of greeting to the Convention of 1927, I have been possessed with an intense desire to assist personally at our Conventions, and the realization of this longing would have been for me an occasion of the greatest joy. But my good Karma was not sufficient to free me from the very urgent and personal duties which on this occasion have prevented me from carrying out my wish, depriving me thus of an experience in the greatest measure profitable by reason of the spiritual significance which this unique occurrence of a Convention of the Theosophical Society involves. I trust to the future for the fulfilment of this most agreeable duty.

May your approaching Convention, then, be the very best, the most dynamic, the richest in spiritual fruit, the most sublime in its teachings, of all that have preceded it.

May the tongues of fire of Divine Wisdom descend from heaven to inflame our hearts and illumine our thoughts.

Fraternally yours,
J. Melitón Quintana.

(*Telegram*) Salamanca, N. Y.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: I send greetings, also message to let you know I am with you in thought and spirit.

Sincerely,
Homer P. Baker.

Lunenburg, Mass.

Secretary T. S.: Greetings to the members in Convention Assembled. I add my gratitude to those who make the Quarterly possible.

Best wishes,
Yours sincerely and fraternally,
Arthur W. Barrett.

MARACAIBO, VENEZUELA.

Secretary T. S.: Since my arrival here I had the good luck of meeting an old member of our Rama [Branch], and we meet every Saturday evening at the same time they meet in Caracas. We have dedicated our meetings to the Masters. May our hearts grow through prayer and devotion to receive Their light and to interpret Their Will.

Maybe this letter reaches you on the eve of Convention. That day I shall be with you all in silent aspiration, for I intend to consecrate the whole day, just as we used to do in Caracas, to that Day of Days. Please bear my message of fraternal love to all the brothers.

Fraternally yours,

J. F. BERMUDEZ.

Mr. Walter H. Box wrote (the Pacific Branch of Los Angeles being represented personally by Mr. Leonard): I feel so hungry myself to be with you that I hardly hold here; a trouble for me is, that when I came away from New York last year I left part of myself behind, which keeps pulling and pulling. And so, whether you see or sense me, or not, I shall be there just the same—and will add to all that goes on, from all that I have gathered meantime, because of my going last year.

From the last paragraphs in the "Screen", I got the clue—Sacrifice, and ever more sacrifice, and the will with which to make them—or, even more, to give oneself, completely.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

Secretary, Theosophical Society: I wish it were possible for me to attend the Convention next Saturday, but the infirmities of age are such in my case as to make it impossible. I trust there may be a good attendance and that you may have an enjoyable and profitable meeting.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

MAHLON D. BUTLER.

DAYTON, OHIO.

Secretary T. S.: It does not appear now that I shall be able to attend the Convention this year, much as I long to do so. Two years ago, in reply to a question I asked Mr. Johnston, he suggested that I endeavour to help the friends who came to me by giving them the Theosophic interpretation of the Bible: to the best of my understanding I did so. I cannot trace all the steps that followed his suggestion, but there are now about fifty persons meeting every Wednesday evening for study; it is not labelled Theosophy, though all know that I am a student of Theosophy, and I frequently read something from the QUARTERLY. I do not know how to teach, I assure them that the Teacher is within each one; that He is also within each experience and circumstance of life if they will become still enough in body and (lower) mind to discover Him.

All eternity is needed in which to express the help I have received from the loyal workers in this mighty movement—this intelligent co-operation with the Masters in raising race-consciousness to higher levels: surely I ought to be willing and thankful for permission to clean up my own doorstep, with such over-shadowing Helpers to encourage and enlighten every sincere effort. Sincerest greetings to all.

LEONA T. FIELD.

TORONTO, CANADA.

To the Secretary T. S.: Once again I have to offer regrets for not attending the Convention. I fully expected to do so and was looking forward to the help and inspiration of which I certainly stand in need, but duty will hold me here.

A. J. HARRIS.

BERLIN, GERMANY.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: We send our hearty greetings to the members at the Annual Convention, and wish that this Convention may be a successful one and may give help to all who seek it.

We are a circle of seven members-at-large, and say our best thanks for the help given us by the articles of the QUARTERLY of the last year. . . . .

Yours fraternally,
O. IHRKE.

TRIESTE, ITALY.

To the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York: Dear Fellow Members, As every year, I beg to send you this year also the kindest greetings and wishes from myself and Mrs. Plisnier. As everywhere, here also has mankind closed his eyes to the truth of spiritual realities, and dragged down to materialization all religious sentiments. The cycle is dark and the workers are few. One is alone with his ideals, with no other comrades than his books.

Perhaps the accomplishment is still very far, and we must hope and wait. May the Master give us the force and the never failing faith of patience.

With best wishes and fraternal greetings, faithfully yours,
ALBERTO PLISNIER,
TERESA PLISNIER.

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York: Dear Comrades, Once again we come to present to you our most heartfelt greetings and wishes for the Great Day of the T. S., the only thing we are now permitted under Karma to contribute to your work. Notwithstanding we shall try to keep near to you in heart and mind at Convention day, hoping that some day in the future we too may be so happy as to share with you in the service of this day. Meanwhile we have to learn in silence and solitude to draw near the Altar to which all our aspirations, devotion and sacrifices are directed, and where we are sure to find, besides the Masters, all our comrades to feel never again in any sense distant from them. May the Blessings of the Masters rest upon your work and bring us all a fresh and stronger impulse for never relaxing effort, courage and endurance to the very end.

In brotherly love,
Yours very sincerely,
ELISABETH SCHOCH,
LEO SCHOCH.

BERLIN-WILMERSDORF, GERMANY.

To the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: We ask you on behalf of the Wilmersdorfer Circle to kindly accept our heartiest greetings and sincerest wishes for a successful Convention. Congregating at Convention day we shall be united with you at this solemn hour.

It is indeed the "fire from heaven" that shines upon us from the last Convention report, kindling our hearts, and setting our wills aflame.

The unity of heart linking us together manifests and expresses itself in a gladdening manner in those lectures and addresses which we are still studying. We consider ourselves highly favoured thus to be able to participate in the proceedings and the spirit of the Convention, in the reflecting light of which—emanating from the Lodge—we see manifested the life and growth of The Theosophical Society.

This fills us with deep joy, and serves as a source of strength for our work here, which is based upon recognition of the fact that our first duty consists in making ourselves fit to successfully help others.

In this spirit we shall be with you heart and soul, looking out for the same brilliant light and gladdening warmth.

Fraternally yours,
OSKAR STOLL,
A. FRIEDEWALD.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA.

Secretary T. S.: All good wishes and hearty greetings to members assembled at our next Convention.

Yours very sincerely and fraternally,
JENNIE BELLE TUTTLE

OCUMARE DEL FUY, VENEZUELA.

To the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York: Dear Fellow-Members: With my fraternal greetings I send to you in this magnificent hour of your meeting the sorrowful notice of Mr. Mauricio de la Cueva's recent death. This companion was an aged member of the Theosophical Society in this country, comrade of J. J. Benzo and Dominguez Acosta, dead long ago. Mr. Cueva was an indefatigable and sincere worker for the Cause, and his life was a living altruistic ideal. So his death has opened a broad voidness in our ranks and a great hurt in our hearts. Among his best known works, he was one of the founders of the 'Venezuela' Branch, whose important works are well known, and later of the Altagracia de Orituco Branch, and of a review entitled "Luz y Armonia", organ of this Branch. Therefore, his entry into the Theosophical field is distinguished by thirty years of courageous labour.

I sincerely wish that the Masters' blessings will inspire your hearts in this solemn hour, during which I feel spiritually united to you.

Fraternally yours,
A. VALEDON.

BERLIN-SCHÖNEBERG, GERMANY.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Dear Comrades: With joy we take the opportunity of this year's Convention to send to you all our heartiest good wishes and greetings.

We are with you in heart and will in the common work, and pray for the Masters' blessing, for fruitful work.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,
RICHARD WALTHER,
HELLMUTH PINTER,
OTTO BETHGE.

SCHRECKENSTEIN, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

To the Treasurer T. S.: . . . . We are firmly convinced that the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY is contributing in a remarkable measure to fulfil the tasks and the purposes of the Theosophical Society and to carry out the intentions of the Great Lodge. To us foreign members it is the speaking trumpet of our revered guides, and by it we perceive the throbbing pulse of the movement. That obliges us to great thankfulness and to active sustentation which we can provide in the meanwhile only by pecuniary resources.

To the Convention I wish from the depth of my heart a full success and the most abundant blessing.

I tried already in my previous letter to intimate to you the deep feeling of a genuine happiness which the last Convention has excited in all of us who were meeting here at the same

time. Under that impression, which each one of us had, we passed the motion to create a fund to be enlarged by annual spontaneous donations, by which after a series of years we shall be able to delegate the worthiest member of our Branch to a Convention; considering, of course, the financial position of the aspirant. Besides that we have created an institution, a fund of spare money, by which also other members of the Branch shall be able to accompany that delegate, as every one of us will have a certain stock serving as a supplement to the travelling expenses. I suppose it is the longing of every member to participate at least once during his lifetime in a Convention of the Theosophical Society. . . . The letters from Oberst Knoff and from Mr. Box, with their inspiring descriptions of the Convention, printed in the "Screen", July, 1927, supported our opinion, that it may be serviceable to keep ready the material means—in addition to the acquirement of the English language—and to assure thereby the outer necessaries. The most important irremissible conditions are rather of a spiritual nature, and to provide them we are praying to the Masters of Wisdom that they may enable us to acknowledge rightly the will and the intentions of the Lodge. . . . .

With heartfelt greetings and best wishes, I remain,

Faithfully and Gratefully yours,

R. JÄGER,

Treasurer T. S. Aussig Branch.

REVIEWS

Au Soir de la Pensée, by Georges Clemenceau; Librairie Plon, Paris, 1927.

M. Clemenceau has illustrated Plutarch's saying that "the study of pleasant and speculative learning, to an old man retiring from office, is a most suitable and becoming solace"; but he has not guarded the fruits of his reflections for himself alone. At the age of eighty-seven, he has published a philosophical treatise in two large volumes containing nine hundred and fifty pages! He is incapable of passing in idle reverie this "evening of his thought".

It is quite impracticable to review the book in detail. There are passages on cosmogony, mythology, symbolism, the history of philosophy, the atomic theory, human and animal psychology, the problem of free-will versus determinism, the origin and nature of the Ego, etc., etc. The reader will search in vain for any sign of failing energies. Clemenceau has in fact raised a monument to the power of the human spirit. Physical age and fatigue, which are generally supposed to be obstacles, have been treated by him as opportunities for the exercise of his faculties. The mere act of writing such a book may thus be regarded as an inspiring affirmation of a will which does not surrender.

Nevertheless, one turns the leaves of this work with a sense of pathos. Clemenceau, the man of vital action, speaks through the mask of a mind moulded long ago into the form of a narrow and dogmatic scientific materialism. Too often "the materialist" eclipses "the man". The reader must content himself with oases of wisdom in a desert of ratiocination. If only the genius had thrown aside the mask and had spoken for itself!

Clemenceau was an active anti-clerical during the painful struggle which culminated in the separation of Church and State in France. In the dust of the battle he seems to have confused the issues involved. In any event, he extends his justifiable contempt for priestcraft to include the whole of what is generally signified by the term, "religion". He makes a tentative exception in favour of primitive Buddhism, because he believes that this was a religion "without gods, without soul, and without prayer" (I, 376). Religion in itself signifies nothing for him but the cowardly instinct impelling us to turn aside "from the struggles of life, in order to fabricate for ourselves another world that is an artificial development of the beatitude of our inertia" (II, 465). These are hard words, but they at least provide religious people with an excuse for self-examination, so that they may discover for themselves how selfless and disinterested their "religion" really is.

Clemenceau has a healthy and thorough-going loathing for cant and pretension, whenever he is able to recognize them, and he does not spare the theologians and the metaphysicians whose explanations of the Universe are too often only plays upon words. To their speculative dogmatism he opposes a positivistic view of existence, limiting ascertainable truth to the domain of scientific experiment. Unfortunately he falls into the error of so many "popularizers" of science, for he arbitrarily restricts the field of experiment to objective, material phenomena. This practically amounts to denying the importance and even the existence of the "consciousness aspect" of being, on the ground that science makes no study of it. One recalls the words of the Oxford satire: "What I know not is not knowledge."

However, this arid positivism is, indeed, only the deceptive vesture of an intense and heroic life. There are moments when the life shines through its mental mould so brightly that this

mould seems temporarily as if dissolved. A few quotations will be more revealing than any commentary.

"Life is a chance to dare. . . . In the universal war of the elements, a flash of enlightenment comes to us, and we experience our first sensations of an ineffable poem which it must be our duty to assimilate and to develop, in order that we may live ideally" (I, 24).

He contrasts the thinker (*l'homme pensant*) and the dreamer (*l'homme rêvant*), insisting upon our obligation to detach ourselves from the fear of the unknown and from the dread of effort, and to awaken our latent powers by an ardent aspiration towards this same unknown, and by a courageous acceptance of all that is involved in what we already know. The thinker "undertakes the task of knowledge, as if eternity lay before him. . . . Before us, at every moment, the unknown retreats as we advance. . . . How many Gods who will have known only the pain of being born, will be worthy of humanity" (I, 57).

" 'Master', cried the disciple, 'who is this God shining in majestic splendour whom I perceive beyond the clouds? Does he not seem to call me?' And the Buddha replied, smiling: 'It is thyself, my son.' " (II, 493).

S. L.

How the Reformation Happened, by Hilaire Belloc; Robert McBride and Company; price $3.50.

There is something more than irony in the title of this finely conceived and vigorously written book; for what accepted history calls the Reformation is, for Hilaire Belloc, nothing less than the Great Calamity, which rent and wounded the spiritual life of Christendom, gravely menacing what he holds to be the supreme treasure of mankind. Tolstoi said that one of the conditions of great writing is, that the writer should sincerely love or hate the people about whom he writes. There must be no Laodicean detachment. This condition, Hilaire Belloc fulfils to perfection; when he loves, he passionately adores, and when he hates, he violently detests; and he blazes with sincerest ardour in putting his feelings on record.

Some students of Theosophy are in full agreement with him in holding that the spiritual life of Christendom is one of the great treasures of mankind, and these students are further in hearty agreement with him in holding that the spiritual life of France is to-day, has been for centuries, and may be for centuries to come, the hope of a future Christian civilization. They are sure to concur in his corollary that Germany has long been, and may long continue, the breeding ground of disruption and evil. Again, he firmly holds, and courageously affirms, that in addition to the opposition of human greed and egotism, we must take into account forces of evil outside our common humanity, forces of evil which showed their malignant hatred on Calvary, and which are active to-day. Here, once more, students of Theosophy would find themselves in full agreement with what is certain to be an unpopular thesis among our latter-day rationalists.

Let us now consider points of disagreement. Hilaire Belloc holds that the Church of Rome is the plenary representative of the Faith, and that the essence of the Church dwells in two things: the Mass and the Papacy. These ideas are of course at complete variance with Theosophy, which would stress the spiritual force of the Saints as the source of renewal in Christendom, and affirm that a central authority must be sought far deeper. Hilaire Belloc, while full of the spiritual glory of the Church, has singularly little to say of the Saints; he is so little preoccupied with them, that he falls into a strange confusion, on page 33, between St. Catherine of Siena and St. Theresa, a confusion surprising in a devout Catholic, who must be familiar with the writings of both these noble women.

But there is a deeper line of cleavage. Students of Theosophy could never concur in his view that the whole spiritual life of mankind is confined within the circle of any Church. A great Roman Catholic Archbishop once said that he hoped to meet Buddha and Plato in heaven. One would fain see Hilaire Belloc temper his feeling for "the heathen" by a like liberality.

J.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 339.—*In what various ways can a new member of the T. S. qualify for "active membership"? That is a term I have noticed in the Convention Reports, and it appeals to me for I do not wish to be a drone in the Society.*

ANSWER.—What would active membership in any Society imply? Activity in forwarding the objects of the Society; activity in manifesting the attitude of the Society; activity in making oneself a part of the spirit and life-blood of the Society, by studying its past history, its literature, its heroes; and entering in,—by loving that which they loved and for which they gave their lives. D. P.

ANSWER.—The Theosophical Society has no dogmas, but various members, from its beginning to the present time, have held interesting and remarkable views concerning the nature of the Universe and the destiny of man. Let the new member try to learn what his fellow-members have been thinking. If he put his heart and mind into the task, he will be in no danger of being a drone.

In other words, let him begin his active membership by study. There is the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, as well as the books and pamphlets recommended by the Quarterly Book Department. He cannot read everything at once, but he can make a start. It is useless to recommend what to read first, for that choice must depend upon the student's temperament and previous intellectual training. In any event, some reading ought to be done.

Sooner or later, the student should learn how to *live* Theosophy. But before he can intelligently begin this arduous and romantic undertaking, he will be wise to gain some notion of what older students have conceived Theosophy to be. S. V. L.

ANSWER.—It might be said that no member of the T. S. can "*qualify* for 'active membership'." A member *is* an active member in just that degree to which he is active. No ceremony, terminating a period of qualification, can confer activity upon him. It is a process of growth and the attainment of ever-deepening levels of activity, while we strive to place a progressively more perfect instrument in the hands of the Soul.

Perhaps we may be permitted to rephrase the question thus: how can a new member of the T. S. become a more active member. To answer that question all our literature exists, and too often, we fear, to the bewilderment of the new member. But we are told that the road of duty runs straight through the labyrinth. The Soul keenly desires to lead us to more abundant life. It arranges the events of our daily lives, and if we will keep wide awake and responsive to our duties of head, heart and hand, we shall find ourselves entering more deeply into the active life of the Soul. Though we may seem insignificant and humble, yet we should realize that we have been gathered within the radius of the Lodge, to help in the accomplishment of its mighty purposes; and that its strength and dignity are ours in so far as we make ourselves worthy to receive them. R. T.

ANSWER.—1. Observe some of those who have been in the Movement from the beginning. Should you like to become yoke-fellow with them?

2. Inquire of those you have observed how you can fit yourself to work with them in the Movement.

3. Put into execution whatever directions may be given you. Thus acting, you will become to that extent "active." S. M.

ANSWER.—I understand this question to apply to *outer* activity only, though of course there is the *inner* which is far the more important of the two. The list of ways in which a new member may "qualify" is long, but one of the very first of these is for him to learn how to use his eyes, and what understanding he may possess,—to learn to give the most careful consideration to everything, great and small, which concerns his new theosophic life. Particularly should he take great care to notice how things are done by other members who have been in the Movement for many years. He should then try to apply these new methods which he has been observing and studying, to his own everyday tasks; thus he will gain a practical experience which will be of great value later on. He will also be wise to get rid of many of his preconceived notions as to what kind of work he would be able to do were he so fortunate as to be an "active member," for he is quite likely to find that that which (before he joined the T. S.) he thought himself fitted for, is in reality not his *forte* at all. Let him keep himself open and unbiased, and he may find that there are hitherto quite unexpected talents buried within him—all of them ways in which he may serve. The more open-minded a new member remains; the less he allows his outworn, personal opinions to blind him to the beauty and grandeur of the new life into which he has entered; the more intelligently he observes, losing no clue,—the sooner is he likely to attain to "active membership." T. D.

ANSWER.—While outer works are important, it seems to me that the most important qualification for "active membership" in the T. S. is the proper attitude of mind. It is necessary to try sincerely to change the focus of one's attention from things of this world to things of the spirit; and if the effort be persistent, some measure of success will inevitably be attained. Moreover, it is necessary to study constantly. Study the articles in the QUARTERLY; study the books listed in the back of the QUARTERLY; study one's self; study others; study life. Study with the object of relating everything to one's own conception of Theosophy, for the purpose of broadening and improving one's understanding of Theosophy and of life. Only those shall know the doctrine who live the life. Therefore, the knowledge gained should diligently be applied to one's daily life. It is futile to wait for full illumination. One should live the life according to the best that one knows now, and more light will be given. Of course, outer works must not be neglected; but it seems to me very easy to place too much emphasis on outer works, thereby giving insufficient attention to the really important thing, which is to seek the spiritual life, not selfishly for one's own advantage, but because one can help humanity best by seeking the light. One cannot rescue others from drowning until one has learned to swim; and I think that as one endeavours to live the life, and in direct measure as one succeeds, the opportunity for outer works will be given. One should attend meetings regularly, and ask questions and join in the discussion when one feels that such questions or discussion will be helpful. Regular attendance is very helpful to one's self, to other members, and to the success of the Theosophical Movement. R. W. A.

ANSWER.—The new member can endeavour to find out what The Theosophical Society is and stands for, by the study of its principal aims and objects; the meaning, in relation to himself and to the world, of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, of the study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, of the unexplained laws of nature, and the psychical powers latent in man, etc. This alone would be quite an activity.

At the same time, if possible, he can attend the meetings and classes of the Society, prepared not only to listen with tolerance and interest to what is said there, but to think about it then and afterwards. He can also cultivate a feeling of sympathy and intelligent affection for the other members of the Society, who are painfully pursuing the same object. He can endeavour to observe in all the past and present phenomena of this world, the working out of what he understands of the principles of Theosophy. And if he try to put into practice at all times in his own consciousness and actions a complete devotion to these principles, he may still consider himself a drone, but no one else will. S. C. L.

(*To be continued.*)

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P. Isis Unveiled, Vols. I and II	cloth,	$10.00
Key to Theosophy	cloth,	3.50
Secret Doctrine, The, Vols. I and II and Index	cloth,	20.00
Complete in one book, without subject-index volume,		7.50
Theosophical Glossary	cloth,	3.50
Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge	cloth,	2.50
Voice of the Silence	cloth, .85, leather,	1.50
Cavé. Fragments, Volume I	boards,	1.00
Volume II	boards,	1.00
Volume III	boards,	1.00
Gerard, John. Letters to Friends	boards,	1.75
Hillard, Katherine. Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth,	3.00
Johnston, Charles. Bhagavad Gita	Translated, annotated; cloth,	1.25
	limp leather,	1.75
Crest Jewel of Wisdom, The	cloth,	1.25
From the Upanishads	paper,	.50
Great Upanishads, The, Volume I	cloth,	1.50
Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper,	.50
Patanjali's Yoga Sutras	Translated, annotated; cloth,	1.25
Song of Life, The	paper,	.75
Judge, William Q. Bhagavad Gita	Edited; cloth, 1.25; leather,	1.50
Echoes from the Orient	cloth,	.60
Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I and II, each	cloth,	1.00
Ocean of Theosophy	cloth,	1.00
Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms	cloth, .75; leather,	1.50
Keightley, Archibald. Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper,	.20
LaDow, Stanley V. Plotinus	paper,	.50
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger. Meditation, Special edition, .20;	paper,	.50
Talks on Religion	cloth,	1.50
Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper,	.20
Sinnett, A. P. Esoteric Buddhism	cloth,	2.50
Occult World, The	cloth,	2.50
Walker, E. D. Reincarnation	cloth,	1.75
Idyll of the White Lotus	cloth,	1.35
Light on the Path	cloth, .75; leather, 1.50; lambskin,	1.75
Through the Gates of Gold	cloth,	1.20

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Devotional: Bhagavad Gita; Crest Jewel of Wisdom; Fragments; The Great Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Letters to Friends; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.

Philosophical: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Isis Unveiled; Key to Theosophy; Plotinus; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Transactions; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.

Introductory: Culture of Concentration; Echoes from the Orient; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

THE KNICKERBOCKER PRESS, NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y.

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.